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THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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MAY 1921.

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MAY 1921.

THOMAS CARLYLE AND THOMAS SPEDDING.

THEIR FRIENDSHIP AND CORRESPONDENCE.

I.

SOME little time ago the Editor of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE did me the honour to send me some forty Letters of Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Story Spedding, written in the years 1838 to 1870, with a request that I should arrange and edit them, or a selection from them, for publication in his Magazine. These letters had been submitted to him by Miss Spedding (grand-daughter of Thomas Spedding), whose property they are. After due consideration I consented to undertake the task—regretting only that the letters had not fallen into the hands of a more able editor. There is some consolation, however, in the thought that the excellence of the letters themselves will more than make amends to the reader for any faults and shortcomings he may find in the editing.

Carlyle and Spedding first became acquainted in London about the end of the year 1837, through Spedding's younger brother James (in later years the biographer of Bacon and the editor of his works), who then held a post in the Colonial Office and was intimate with Carlyle's friend John Sterling. The home of the Spedding family was in Cumberland, near Keswick and the big mountain Skiddaw, but Thomas came up to London occasionally to visit James and enjoy city life for a while. About the middle of February 1838, Thomas Spedding called, for the first time I think, at Carlyle's house, 5 Cheyne Row, Chelsea, but unluckily did not find him at home. The next day Carlyle wrote him a note regretting his absence, and pressing him to repeat his call and to bring his brother James with him, telling him also the days and hours when they would be sure of finding him at home. After this the Spedding brothers, either singly or together, when both in town, became regular callers, and Carlyle enjoyed their society and liked them both, especially Thomas, whose modesty,

intelligence, warm friendliness, and transparent honesty pleased him greatly. They had long walks together in the London parks, or on the streets, followed by brilliant talks and cosy teas with Mrs. Carlyle in the old Chelsea drawing-room. The two Thomases soon became devoted friends, and their devotion lasted as long as they both lived in this world. As their correspondence shows, their esteem for each other only increased as time went on. At an early stage in their acquaintance Carlyle, writing at Scotsbrig, September 13, 1838, says to Spedding, 'I should heartily grudge to leave the North Country without at least an effort towards seeing one I like so well.' In a letter of September 1841 to Mrs. Carlyle, he describes Spedding as 'the kindest of men, and one of the sensiblest I have seen for years; a far better judgement and deeper eyesight than his brother, who produces himself more.' Again, in writing to Spedding himself he says, September 1845, 'I am very sorry to see little or no prospect of meeting with you even in Cumberland on this occasion; one of the few men whom it is really solacing to me to meet with!' Spedding's appreciation of Carlyle, on the other hand, is expressed not so much in words as in deeds of kindness done to him; zealous and oft-repeated entertainment of him at hospitable Greta Bank and Mirehouse; invitations again and again extended to him to come once more, and to bring Mrs. Carlyle with him; his own frequent calls at Cheyne Row when in town—all show the pleasure he felt in Carlyle's society. He was, too, a reader of Carlyle's works; and though, with characteristic honesty, disagreeing with one or two minor points in his doctrines in the 'Latter-day Pamphlets' and 'Life of John Sterling,' he yet declares that 'your lamp, of modern ones, I can sincerely say has lighted me the farthest.'

Of Spedding's letters to Carlyle I have found about a score among his papers, and give a few as specimens and helps towards elucidation of this correspondence.

Of Carlyle's I have selected as many as possible, bearing in mind the limits of the space at my disposal.

A. CARLYLE.

LETTER 1.

Carlyle, during the first half of the year 1838, having published his article on Sir Walter Scott (*London and Westminster Review*, No. 12), having also delivered his longest course of public lectures

('On the History of Literature, or the Successive Periods of European Culture'—twelve lectures), and superintended the printing of his 'Sartor Resartus' (the first English edition in book-form), had fallen into a decidedly weak state of health, and was advised by his wife to take a holiday in Scotland. About the middle of August he sailed from London to Leith; visited friends in Kirkcaldy, Edinburgh, Minto (near Hawick); then made his way across the country to Scotsbrig, his mother's home, and a few days after his arrival there wrote the following letter to Thomas Spedding.

'My Brother' (mentioned in the letter) is Dr. Carlyle, at that time Travelling Physician to Lady Clare; the 'Colonial Secretary' is Spedding's younger brother James, who is also referred to under a great variety of other epithets in this correspondence, such as 'The Ex-Secretary,' 'The Legation Secretary,' 'Lord Bacon,' 'Bacon Redivivus,' 'The Baconian Philosopher,' 'The Champion of Bacon,' &c.

*Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Mirehouse, Nr. Keswick,
Cumberland.*

Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan,
September 13th, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—Having arrived within sight of my old friend Skiddaw again, I naturally bethink me of the new far kinder friend who lives sheltered about the roots of Skiddaw. I have been in Fife, in Edinburgh, in Roxburghshire; I got hither on Saturday night last. My appetite for locomotion, at no time vehement, is altogether satisfied now, and more; but I should heartily grudge to leave the North Country without at least an effort towards seeing one I like so well. Pray instruct me therefore what your capabilities are; that I may compare them with mine; that we may calculate, and see what will come of it. This place, my Mother's dwellingplace, is not above twenty miles from Carlisle City, the Cathedral of which in good weather is visible from any of our knolls. Carlisle is attainable any day along the Glasgow Highway without difficulty; one might be there about noon or one o'clock; nay in the afternoon (arriving, I should fancy, between three and four) there is a coach that passes within some two miles of me. Beyond Carlisle, all is Chaos, Nox and—Elysium! Finally, till about this day week I could not well get away; if indeed then, or at all; for all is out of square here: my Brother belated in his

return out of Italy, my Mother still but *expected* out of Lancashire, &c., &c. Not to mention again that I myself am sated with locomotion, and sinking daily deeper into unutterable brown-study, Werterean reminiscences, torpor and *far-niente*. This is the posture of things on my side of the water; now what of yours? I will answer you in words; in deeds I will perform for the common cause what I can.

The Colonial Secretary must be with you; enjoying the blessed Scotch mists. Pray remember me affectionately to him; you may also, before my advent, inquire privily of him whether he is provided with a tobacco-pipe? He will be, or has been, astonished to learn that John Sterling is not within the Four Seas now, but suddenly off to Italy for the winter.

I write no more, with this bad pen, with this pale ink; but subscribe myself, with much hearty regard, and sure hopes of meeting now or afterwards,

My dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

THOMAS CARLYLE.

LETTER 2.

Thomas Spedding to Thomas Carlyle, Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan.

Mirehouse, Nr. Keswick,
September 16th, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am rejoiced to hear tidings of you at last, and from within such reasonable reach of us. *Per fas aut nefas* we must meet. The Colonial Secretary and I may probably pay you a morning visit some early day this week; but failing such encounter, we will wait your convenience here. There is a daily Coach from Carlisle to Whitehaven, leaving Carlisle about Two p.m., which will set you down at Wigton, 11 miles west of the Cathedral, and 15 miles from this place; and there we would meet you any time at a day's notice, and be happy to keep you with us as long as you could stay. We are three generations under one roof, with no great store of Philosophy among us, but a fair modicum of sincerity and tobacco. Moreover the mists and the deluges have somewhat abated of late, which helps to disperse Werterism when, as Crabbe says, 'both rest and reason fail.'

We were apprised of Sterling's flight by Dr. Calvert, who has flown with him, and who was with him last winter in Madeira.

He is an old neighbour and friend of ours and was staying with us for some weeks before he received Sterling's summons. They seem to get on together very well, and to exchange Physic and Metaphysic to the common benefit of both.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful

T. S. SPEDDING.

Ecclefechan,

Monday night.

Having a fancy for a ride in this improved weather I brought this letter in my pocket thus far; but we have made a failure in our attempt to run you to earth. From your saying that you could not get away before the end of the week we had over-hastily inferred that you would certainly be at home till then. As it is, I trust you will now feel yourself bound to come to us, be it through fire or through water; and we shall count upon receiving from you very shortly a proposition to that effect.

The above instructions will, I hope, be sufficient; but I may add that in case you ever travel on horseback the sands from Annan to Bowness will bring you to Wigton in Cumberland ten miles nearer than going round by Carlisle.

LETTER 3.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Mirehouse, Nr. Keswick.

Scotsbrig.

September 27th, 1838.

MY DEAR SIR,—Things go not well with me here. My unlucky absence when you and the Secretary did these rough districts the honour of a visit, was but the first of a considerable series of mischances; the general sum of which, alas, is *No Cumberland for me this year!* It is not without far more regret than is commonly implied in the word 'regret' so used, and not till the last vestige of rational feasibility has disappeared, that I make this decision. Nay now when it is made, I feel as if I had done wrong; as if, especially after such kindness shown me, I had been fated and bound to come. But my Brother arrived only a week ago, and insists on being back to Town on Wednesday first, with the possibility of Italy again close behind that; so that I cannot leave him. I tried to persuade him with me; but neither, in his great haste, would that answer. The Coaches do not answer; your

Wigton Coach leaves Carlisle an hour before our Glasgow one arrives; and then as for my own means of transport they are of the most elegiac description: an antique vehicle of the Gig species, very rheumatic on its springs, and drawn by a young plough-horse, entirely inadequate for long journeys! Another horse, thought to be efficient, *rebelled* with me in Nithsdale already: I said I had been unlucky every way. And I have no wings, no Fortunatus' Hat or Wishing-carpet; and I *see* the peak of your Mountain, sunny, over the olive-coloured vapours of Autumn, and I cannot get to it this year, and must go far before there be hope of getting to it! I declare myself exceedingly vexed.

But if it please Heaven, there is another year coming. As Fritz the Great said, when he lost the Battle, 'another time we will do better.' Meanwhile think of me kindly, my dear Sir, among your Hills, as I surely shall do many times of you in the Brick wilderness whither my lot leads me. Tell your Brother to announce his arrival there to me. And so farewell for this time, *not* for all times!

Believe me ever

Heartily yours,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 4.

Before the date of this letter Thomas Spedding had married, and set up his Lares and Penates at Greta Bank (for Carlyle's description of which see *post*, introduction to Letter 8), and here he lived until after the death of his father (John Spedding) in January, 1851, when he returned to Mirehouse and spent the rest of his days there as its owner and master.

It is to be inferred from certain phrases in this letter that Spedding had brought his young wife to call on the Carlyles at Chelsea, probably on the honeymoon trip.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Chelsea,

June 9th, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,—You are very kind to remember me again as the season comes round. I have never forgiven myself for the failure of last year. Both my Wife and I are resolute for Keswick on this occasion; so promising a *partie quarrée* as might establish itself

there is worth some effort. If we go Northward at all (which seems much the likeliest course), it shall decidedly be set about. Whether in going, while remaining or in returning? We will warn you duly; and avoid the barren week.

My Brother wants me to come to him at Ischl near Vienna this year. The Americans want me to go across the Atlantic, and lecture to them on things in general. Ah me! I should be very well where I am, if my nerves were but made of *clock-tharm*. But they are not. One acquires a *velocity* here like that of the Brum magem grinding-stones, when, with too swift turning, they explode, and fly off into a whirlwind of sand!

Pray offer Mrs. Spedding our united kind regards, our wish and hope to be better acquainted with her. I calculate on writing to you more precisely before long; and am always,

My dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 5.

Carlyle had long been deeply concerned about the condition of the working classes in this country, and the Chartist movement of 1839 determined him to write something on the subject. Before he and his wife left London for Scotland in the beginning of July he had commenced an Article 'On the Working Classes,' intended for the *Quarterly Review*, and brought the unfinished paper with him. On trial he found it impossible to complete it in the country; at home in the autumn, however, it was finished; but as the editor of the *Quarterly* did not dare to publish it, Carlyle himself brought it out as a separate pamphlet entitled 'Chartism.' It now occupies a place amongst his 'Miscellaneous Essays.' The fourth paragraph of this letter reads almost like a portion of 'Chartism'; there is nothing wiser or finer in the pamphlet or out of it than is here set down in quiet and eloquent words to his friend T. Spedding.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Templand, Thornhill, Dumfries,
August 2nd, 1839.

MY DEAR SIR,—You are very good to think of us still. I sent you a *Times* Newspaper the other day, as a mute token of my

existence and remembrance ; yet with doubts whether you would be able to interpret it so. I am here for the last two weeks ; one of the most unoccupied, loneliest, far from one of the joyfulest of men. From time to time I feel it absolutely necessary to get into entire solitude ; to beg all the world, with passion if they will not grant it otherwise, to be so kind as leave me altogether alone. One needs to unravel and bring into some articulation the villainous chaos that gathers round heart and head in that loud-roaring Babel ; to repent of one's many sins, to be right miserable, humiliated, and do penance for them—with hope of absolution, of new activity and better obedience ! These last two years I have spent in inaction ; not in rest ; but like a man lying shot on a Waterloo-field, waiting whether he was to get strength again, or to lie and be buried there. Let us hope. All walking, they say, is a succession of *falls*. I go wandering with closed lips over the green summer here ; in this *unspeakable* Universe, winds and waters alone speaking of it to me. One could sit down and burst into streams of tears ; but it would serve no purpose.

What you say of your Brother gives me a great shock. I knew not at all that it was so. Yesterday, no farther gone, I wrote a light line to James at the Colonial Office, fancying he was there as usual ; little in accordance with Leamington where it will find him. Ah me ! And 'life,' as you say, 'must go on.' Life is as awful as Death ; as awful and far more toilsome. They that die early depart but an hour before us ; in an hour we shall rejoin them—and the Great God will dispose of us all even as He wills, not as we will, and there shall at least be *rest together* forevermore. What a wretched stroller's farce were life throughout, did not the great black curtain of Death hang ever in the background ; great as Eternity, inscrutable as God !

It is among our clearest purposes not to return home this year without visiting you. Nothing but some incapability signified on your part is likely to prevent us. Meanwhile as to time, manner, circumstances, all is yet as vague as ever. I can guess only that it will probably be towards the end of this month before we stir anywhere. My Medical Brother is home again unexpectedly from Italy, and expected here in a few days ; I am also trying to *work*—God knows with what success. You shall hear from me again in due time. Send me an old Newspaper in the interim ; a Letter if anything special take place, good or evil.

What you say of Chartism is the very truth : revenge begotten

of ignorance and hunger ! We have enough of it here too ; the material of it exists I believe in the hearts of all our working population, and would right gladly body itself in *any* promising shape ; but Chartism begins to seem unpromising. What to do with it ? Yes, there is the question. Europe has been struggling to give some answer, very audibly ever since the year 1789 ! The gallows and the bayonet will do what *they* can ; these altogether failing, we may hope a quite other sort of exorcism will be tried. Alas it is like a dumb overloaded Behemoth, torn with internal misery and rage ; but dumb, able only to roar and stamp : let the doctors *say* what ails it, let both doctors and drivers and all men tremble if they cannot say,—for the creature itself is by nature dumb, you need not ask *it* to speak ! Unless gentry, clergy and all manner of washed articulate speaking men will learn that their position towards the unwashed is contrary to the Law of God, and change it soon, the Law of Man, one has reason to discern, will change it before long, and that in no soft manner. I pray Heaven they might learn ; but fancy that many stripes will be needed first. However, it is in the hands of the right School-master ; one who, whatever his *wages* may rise to, does verily get his lesson *taught*. Experience of actual Fact either teaches fools, or else abolishes them. For the rest, that England will not become what Ireland is, that England has taken to protesting, even inarticulately, at a point far short of that, is perhaps a thing one ought to be glad of. The fever-fit of Chartism will pass, and other fever-fits ; but the thing it means will not pass, till whatsoever of truth and justice lies in the heart of it has been fulfilled ; it cannot pass till *then*,—a long date, I fear.

I know not why I have scribbled so much ; I intended only a word, and have sent many. My Wife joins me in kind salutations to you and yours. Unless things go *too* perversely we shall all meet soon.

Ever faithfully yours,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 6.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan,
September 6th, 1839.

Alas, my dear Sir, precisely on the day when I was about writing to you, to fix, in spite of all obstacles, the time of our meeting,

arrives the fatal Letter!¹ Before now, I suppose, all is over. 'Dust to dust, and the spirit to God who gave it!' 'God is great,' say the Moslem; 'God is good,' add the Christians: to which what further can we add? That it is mystery and awe, this Life of ours; that *Silence* is fittest of all. I never knew your dear Brother, of you also I have seen with my eyes but little; yet it seems to me at this moment as if I had known you both long, and loved you well.

We have forthwith renounced the notion of Cumberland altogether for this year. We had no strict call except to you; and from you we are now too mournfully absolved by this event. Cumberland is wrapt in sorrow and shade to one's thoughts; visiting there, or anywhere, is not our business any more at present. We purpose getting to Carlisle on Monday; then by the Preston Railway home as soon as possible,—on the following forenoon as we calculate. If you could write me a word thither, or failing you if James were to write, I feel as if it would be kind; tho' indeed at bottom, what is there to say? Alas, all is already said. God comfort you, my friend.

I shall have a Book to send you: is Carlisle the place to direct it towards?

With true sympathy,
Yours always,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 7.

This is a letter to Thomas Spedding, dated November 9, 1840, and quaintly modelled in the form of an affidavit, giving in brief space and with emphasis his opinion of Dr. Sewell, the Oxford dignitary and leading Puseyite, who had published in the then current *Quarterly Review* a critique on Carlyle and his teaching. Not wishing to get into controversy Carlyle did not make any public reply to Dr. Sewell; indeed he agreed with much of what he had written, and held on the whole no very bad opinion of the Puseyites. See his letter to Thomas Ballantyne in 'New Letters of Thomas Carlyle,' i. 215.

¹ Announcing that his brother's illness, referred to in the preceding letter, had taken a fatal turn and that there was no hope of his recovery.

Carlyle, by way of 'brief portable commentary' on Sewell and the *Quarterly Review*, deposes :

1. That he the said Carlyle is not, and never was, in use to make much of Pantheism or indeed of any other *theism* or *ism* now or lately current in the world ; that he is willing to let all men be Pantheists or Pottheists according to their convenience, and claims a like liberty for himself. That he infinitely prefers *Silence* on that highest matter to any Speech, or other utterance by Liturgy, Ceremony, Painting, Poetry, Surplice, Pitchpipe, or Hand-organ, that he has met with in these latter ages, or hopes to meet with for an age or two. That he says sometimes, with Faust in Goethe, 'Who dare name Him?'—and yet struggles to pardon the very Calmucks, who pray by means of a rotatory calabash.

2. That he felt a pleasant surprise at finding himself taken up under the category of Puseyism or Antipuseyism, little more pertinent than that of Teetotalism or Antiteetotalism ; and could not forbear thanking Heaven and Oxford, as for an unexpected mercy, and kindness bestowed altogether to boot, that he had founded a new religion, as it were, in his sleep.

3. That, participating in Father Sewell's earnest feelings about many things, the said Carlyle regards Sewell, morally considered, as a man of worth ; and Puseyism as a thing of worth,—cheering as a *symptom*, likely to do much good as an agent,—tho' whether in revivifying the Church of England or in more swiftly exploding it, deponent saith not, and indeed hardly cares.

4. That Carlyle regards the said Sewell and Puseyism, intellectually or practically considered, as a chimera (or even, according to Detrosier the Manchester Lecturer, as 'a chimæra'¹), literally, as it were, the shadow of a *shade*,—shadow, namely, of the right reverend Father Archbishop Laud, who, little more than a cobweb even while living, had the head cut off him near two hundred years ago, and is not appointed to appear in England a second time at this day, or at any day, short perhaps of the *Last*.

5. That the said Carlyle's pen is very bad, and his time short. That he persists and is like to persist in hearty good-will towards Thomas Spedding ; and wishes often he lived, like him, among the everlasting hills, far from all jargon and chaff ; and even proposes to do it some day. And farther the deponent saith not.

Given in our Tub at Chelsea,
this 9th day of Novr., 1840 years.

¹ Pronounced Kimmerra by the lecturer.

LETTER 8.

The Carlyles deciding to spend the summer holidays of 1841 together in Scotland, Carlyle left Chelsea early in July to secure quarters,—Mrs. C. and their servant to follow afterwards when all should be ready for them. Carlyle rented a furnished cottage called Newby, near Annan, on the shore of the Solway. Here they stayed from the 1st till near the end of August, when Carlyle took his wife to her mother's at Templand,—she not being strong enough to accompany him to Greta Bank, as had been arranged,—himself afterwards going to Scotsbrig, whence his brother James drove him to Carlisle in time to catch the coach for Keswick, where Thomas Spedding was waiting for him with a gig. In a letter to Mrs. Carlyle, September 1, he gives an interesting description of Greta Bank, his hosts, and his kind reception there. 'I find all hospitable, elegant, honest, and good here; I shall do well enough for a day or two. It is a new, large, many-winged House, on smooth elevated lawns, with woods, with walks, the everlasting moan of the Greta Water (rather louder than Newby) heard far down under these windows. On looking out at six o'clock this morning, my view was up Borrowdale: gnarled mountains, umbrageous, verdant, craggy, spotted and pitted with shadow and sunshine, rock and tree; about the beautifullest view I ever in my life looked on. . . . I wish my poor Goody had been here to see with me! But she has not strength for it more than I. Great regret is expressed for her,—expressed *and* understood!'—This was Carlyle's first visit to any of the country houses of the Speddings.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Newby, Annan, N.B.,
August 12th, 1841.

DEAR MR. SPEDDING,—We look daily, from all our windows here, out at your Mountains, or the grey storm-veil of your Mountains; and had been often thinking of you before your Letter came. A visit from us, which depends on two parties, Destiny and Mortal men, is predetermined by the one of these: we will hope that the other will not, as so often before, play us false! As a proof that resolve is already passing into action, tho' small action, learn that I have last night procured from Fraser of Regent Street a travelling

map of Cumberland, significant I do believe of your very footpaths; with this I hope to drive and fare : to such length have we already gone. I fancied that I knew Helvellyn and Saddleback here ; this morning I try to confirm them by the new authority ; but the light is never good : not once, for seven years, have I seen these beautifullest mountains of a right colour ; sometimes about sunset they get to be, not of azure, but of a kind of mournful dirty bishop's-purple, which is their best ; for which too I am thankful. Not a peak of them that is not rich with old memories for me ; sad and beautiful as Life is, as Death is. On the whole, it is long since I have had so interesting a Dialogue with any of my Fellow-creatures as with this waste sandy ever-moaning Tide-flood of the Solway ! A great, an ugly, inarticulate, lamentable but veracious kind of thing ; with hoarse voice as from Eternity ; of whose meaning there is no end. And my friends the Seamews, the Gulls and the Sandlarks,—not to say the Halve-net Fishers, and the two-and-thirty Winds of heaven, bringing cloud-fields and savage wind-music out of all lands under the sky, and from the very sky itself ! Cockneydom shrinks all into the size of a worm-eaten walnut, and this whole Existence of ours with its Peel-ministries and solar systems is worth little and worth much ! Let us be thankful.

We quit this place precisely about the time of your return out of Yorkshire ; I think, the very day before. We have then a visit of about a week to my Mother-in-law's, 'Templand, Thornhill, Dumfries' ; after which,—we think seriously of what is next to be done !

The great obstacle here is, getting across the Firth. At Wigton, I think you once said, we are but some 16 miles from you ? From Wigton here we can scarcely be above 7 or 8 ; not above 15 even at Scotsbrig from which we should likeliest start. To go round by Carlisle is heartbreaking ; to stay all night in an Inn,—with the beautiful likelihood, among others, of not sleeping ; of coming to you bleary-eyed, shattered, half-distracted and undone ! Somehow or other we must manage to get on in a single day. It seems there is a man hereabouts, there are men, who will 'guide' a bad old gig and quiet horse over to Bowness at low-water, and we ourselves can go at high-water and find it ready there. Do we come by Ireby after Wigton, or how ? Some way or other we must actually try to come,—and not waste our map, and so much else !

For the rest, pray let us have nobody at all, except the Colonial Secretary and what the ground naturally brings. We bargain for pot-luck in all senses; pot-luck, the Colonial Secretary and a little tobacco. If Speech come, well; if Silence (as the Colonial Secretary understands), still better. I should like to climb Skiddaw; but there will be no weather for it. I could also wish to make acquaintance with Long Meg and her Daughters, unless their place be too distant;—old Druid Meg! We must drive down one day moreover and see the good Miss Fenwick; then back again by you, and see the Marshalls. My Wife, you observe, counts at present on going with me. We shall have for all these enterprises something like a week of time. After which the Pilgrimess bends towards Tynemouth and Miss Martineau; the Pilgrim not thitherward (having been there already), elsewhither, into unknown Space.

On the whole if you let us hear from you the day after your return, it will be as speedy to address, 'Scotsbrig, Ecclefechan' (Thornhill lies rather apart from mail ways); I will answer shortly: we shall see better then what face Destiny makes. Much too, alas, must depend on the weather!

Adieu, dear hospitable Spedding. Remember us in all kindness to the Lady Bountiful; to the sardonic Ex-Secretary.

Yours always,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 9.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Chelsea,

September 30th, 1841.

DEAR SPEDDING,—The Letter forwarded from Greta Bank found me duly here. I did go by Tynemouth after all,—the female genius, the bad weather, and many other things constraining me: I had four days more of dialogue with the Sea; and then shot hitherward as on the Arrow of Abaris,—on the Darlington Railway, namely: it was that very night the hapless Blakesley was murdering in Eastcheap;—how many things the impartial stars look down on! I came home, rather a sadder, we fear not much a wiser man. But we shall see. I can say, one of the pleasantest episodes of these months, indeed of these late years, was the one

at Keswick. Yes, truly; and more than pleasant! But there is no need for words.

The Letter you forwarded was from Sterling. I enclose you the whole contents, if perhaps they may amuse you for a moment. Unluckily you cannot get good of them as pipe-matches. Small profit lies in such paper otherwise.

The Rev. Noel Something sends me his Pamphlet, which I had already seen: here goes it too. And two Portraits from Oxford: have you seen two prettier men? The weasel-face and the ferret-face,—truly prophetic countenances both! May the Lord make us thankful.

The rain falls here continually; in a style that would do credit to Borrowdale or the Solway. I sit within doors; secluded from the very Postman, for I have forbidden him to knock or disturb me, he throws in his Letters by a slit, and passes on. I sit in death-duel with Dulness, battle, battle; the betting hitherto on *her* side! But, as before, we shall see.

I desire Mrs. Spedding to remember me as kindly as I do her;—which, alas, is hardly a fair bargain. If the Ex-Secretary be still within reach, tell him to smoke one cigar in memory of me, and to come soon. Let me offer my regards to Miss Spedding, to Mirehouse generally, and to the Genius of the Hills.

Good be with you always. So prays, from the heart,

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 10.

Thomas Spedding to Thomas Carlyle, Chelsea.

Greta Bank,
October 7th, 1841.

MY DEAR CARLYLE,—I take the opportunity of a very wet day to send you thanks for your late dispatch, which was welcome in all its parts, the prophetic countenances included, but most of all for the intimation of your friendly remembrance of us all. If your visit was agreeable to yourself, you may be assured it was equally so to us; and we trust it will be often repeated in the years to come, with the addition of the female genius on your side also, who was this time the only thing wanting.

Our routine has not varied much since your departure. The Ex-Secretary shoots, and reads Bacon and Miss Austen, as heretofore, without having yet determined the degrees intervening between the latter and Shakespeare. Myers is gone to Hallsteads to splice Whewell this very day, so that the stars will have that also to look down upon shortly. On Monday last, being the mensiversary of the Socialist supper, no great gun being in the way, he lectured himself upon the great theme of Education; but how well or how ill I don't know, having very willingly been engaged at Cockermouth administering out-door relief.

It does not appear that the political millennium is advancing very sensibly under Peel & Co., while the Duke [of Wellington] affirms that there is no want of food in the land, and, at all events, that during the shooting season nobody can reasonably expect the national distempers can be enquired into. However, in the Spring we shall be offered Church extension as a cure for everything.

Meanwhile I intend to study *Wilhelm Meister* and try honestly what I can make of that, and I shall duly report the result to you. If one could only get to the bottom of life in any one department, or to any true depth below the surface, light would undoubtedly rise upon many other departments and spread more or less over one's whole horizon. If that original Christian Portrait could be effectually cleared from theological dust and cobwebs, the clearest light would probably issue from thence. At present the weasels and ferrets and owls stand hopelessly between us.

As for Goethe's own language I am ashamed to confess I am hopeless of it. The *vis inertiae* has been my evil genius for forty years—'the things that I would I do not.' However, your lamp, which of modern ones I can sincerely say has lighted me the farthest, will haply light me to Goethe too. I will really try.

I think it will be a few weeks longer before you see the Ex-Secretary again in London; but he will certainly return thither before winter. Remember us very kindly to Mrs. Carlyle, and believe me most unfeignedly your *obliged* and affectionate

T. S. SPEDDING.

LETTER 11.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Keswick.

Chelsea,

February 13th, 1842.

The Legation-Secretary, just disappearing over the Western horizon, waves me this satirical farewell.¹ The old man, there as here! Good go with him, the true soul!

For the last three months I have charitably been supposing that in the Rt. Hon. Sir R. Peel, Conservative Minister in these times, there might lie some elements, long concealed, of a great man; at lowest, of a rational man, meaning something by becoming Tory Minister, not meaning nothing. He speaks; and audibly calls himself Windbag, pitifullest pettifogging Quack; ignorant that God's Universe stands on anything but electioneering majorities and Parliamentary 'cases well dressed up.' He, too, will have to march before long, with *new* troubles at his heels. The times do really grow ominous. Except perhaps there be some hope in Gladstone, Conservatism so far as one can see it in Parliament is rushing swiftly to its ruin; and then—?

As for me, I am sick; swimming in chaos these many weeks, nigh drowning—towards no visible shore. Ordered by all the gods to write; forbidden by all the devils! *Ora pro me.*

Did that majestic Christmas Pie which astonished the world here come from Cumberland? Such was the guess of some; not mine. The address is in none of your hands; I am known by all of you for a man that cannot eat pies!

Blessings on you all,

T. C.

¹ James Spedding's 'satirical farewell' is dated from H.M.S. *Warspite*, Yarmouth Roads, February 12, 1842, and reads as follows:—

'My dear Carlyle,—A stormy South-Wester keeping us here at anchor gives me an opportunity of congratulating you on the issue of Sir R. Peel's deliberations, which have no doubt satisfied you concerning his character.—Ever yours Jas. Spedding. P.S.—A letter addressed to me under cover to the Lord Ashburton, will find me sooner or later.'—James, having left the Colonial Office, was now Secretary to Lord Ashburton, and just about to sail with his lordship on his special mission to America. Sir R. Peel, who had lately introduced his new sliding scale of corn duties, was now for the time being extremely unpopular. By and by he redeemed himself in the eyes of Carlyle, and won his high respect. They had become quite friendly and intimate long before Sir Robert's tragic death on July 2, 1850.

LETTER 12.

*Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.*Templand, Thornhill, Dumfries,
March 26th, 1842.

DEAR SPEDDING,—An event has occurred here, of which it seems to me you ought to be apprised. My poor Mother-in-law, Mrs. Welsh of this place, was unexpectedly called away by death, on the 25th of last month. We had no intimation or suspicion of her danger; she had been complaining, but was often sickly, and treated this, and taught us to treat it, as a mere common illness. Our first alarm was from the Doctor on the very day when death followed. Her only Daughter and Child was then sick at Chelsea; but started instantly, in a paroxysm of hope and fear; travelling all night, she was met at her Uncle's door in Liverpool on the morrow morning, by the news that all had already ended. She stopped there. She is now home again at Chelsea, with one of her cousins to nurse her; the tone of her Letters is still full of misery.

I am here ever since this day three weeks; entirely alone for the last week. Multiplicities of sad rustic business are to be arranged; for this establishment is to be concluded, and lies suddenly all round me in ruins,—like an arch with its keystone suddenly struck out. I fear I shall be detained here some three weeks yet.

I send you many kind thoughts across the Frith, and these sad tidings, having none better. You need not write till I get back to London.

Yours ever faithfully,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 13.

*Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.*Chelsea,
May 10th, 1842.

MY DEAR SPEDDING,—Your melancholy tidings¹ found me still in Scotland, preparing just to quit it. I looked from the Frith

¹ The death of Spedding's mother.

into your Skiddaw mountains, and thought of Bassenthwaite still Church-yard and the new-made Grave. Alas, it is the law of man's existence here below; the sacredest ties, of Mother and Child, are appointed from of old to be cut asunder; the parent has to die and the son to be left living: it was the will of Nature from the first. Beneficent too;—yes, kind, tho' rigorous and stern; as the Great God, whose work we are, everywhere is.

Your Brother has a small cheery Note lying here for me, announcing in quizzical enigmatic style his safe arrival: the smile dies mournfully away in reading him; poor fellow, for him too a sharp pang is in store. Ah me, why did Death come into the world?—Say rather, why was it a world at all! We have no business to ask such questions. Adieu thou mild maternal Figure, entered now upon Eternity; we too shall soon be there!

I staid two nights in Lancashire; on the morrow after my arrival in Liverpool, I went over to Manchester and returned. The most tragic circumstance I noted there was the *want of smoke*; Manchester was never in my time third-part as clear. What a strange country we are at this hour! Two thousand men and women assembled the other Saturday night before the Provost's door in Paisley, and stood, without tumult, indeed almost in silence: when questioned as to their purposes, they said they had no money, no food nor fuel, they were Fathers and Mothers, working men and women, and had come out there to see whether they could not be saved alive. The police withdrew to a distance, there were soldiers hard by to have checked any riot. By dint of great efforts the Provost collected a sum which yielded one penny farthing to each, and at sunrise they had gradually dispersed again. O Peel, O Russell—and indeed O England and all Englishmen! We have gone on the accursed Law of Egoism and Mammon, and every sort of *Atheism*, which was a lie from the beginning; and now it has broken down under us, and unless we can recover ourselves out of it, the abyss is gaping for us. We are all fearfully to blame, and make but a mad figure the most of us; but surely of all distracted Phenomena in the human shape at present, that of a volunteer Prime Minister à la Peel, à la Melbourne may be accounted one of the maddest,—for *he* might have avoided it! I consider sometimes that if we do not within very few years get some Prime Minister of a very different sort, Chartism or some still more frightful *ism* is as good as inevitable for us.

On Saturday last, having paused the night before at Rugby, I went with Dr. Arnold on pilgrimage to the Battle-field of Naseby. It was a most striking place for me ; equal to Marathon or better. The poor old Saxon village, with its old Christian Church, its trim scattered huts, high-roofed, mud-walled, and the localities and burial-heaps of such a crisis and cardinal paroxysm still moderately traceable there ! I pray daily for a new Oliver. Something it might be could we so much as get to see the old one ! That, you will politely say, depends on me. Alas, alas ! never in all my days, with a natural proclivity towards the impossible, have I got so deeply sunk, covered over head and ears, in that element as even now ! The dumb Oliver, I often fear, will have to remain forever dumb.

Yesterday the great encyclopedical Professor [Whewell], last seen converting the Keswick population to true views of astronomy or rather of theory in general, called here with his Wife. Most happy-looking both ; somewhat argumentative he, and suspicious apparently that my intents in regard to several things were wicked and not charitable. Nature has many purposes to serve. Nature makes royal lion-souls, thick-hided rhinoceroses also, draught-oxen and the cattle on a thousand hills.

Adieu, dear Spedding ; I am but wasting your time and my own. Many kind remembrances to your good Life-Partner. Send me a kind thought now and then ; and good be ever with you both, and with you all !

Your affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 14.

Thomas Spedding to Thomas Carlyle, Chelsea.

Greta Bank,
June 21st, 1842.

MY DEAR CARLYLE,—In the midst of smiling Nature (for it is the finest summer I ever remember) the political sky seems growing darker and darker. The Newspapers are full of famine, and, for legislative remedy, of endless debates about bribery at Elections. I write to know if you, from your nearer position, see or hear of anything more promising : if Peel or anti-Peel is getting at length convinced that there is no cure for hunger but bread, and no suppression of hunger but death. Do these great Conservatives propose to do anything at all ?

I am not a reader of Judgement, nor could ever discern to my own conviction the design of Providence in the order of this world ; but it is plain at least, that man has a perpetual demand upon man for his turn at Nature's table, and the means also of making his claim good,—whatever persons or things may stand in his way. The ignorance, however, of this on the part of the British Aristocracy seems destined to involve us in some rough weather very shortly.

I know what you think and feel about this in general, but should be glad to know what you think in particular at this present ; and if there is not a hope that the thickly gathering distress may make Peel a wiser man in spite of himself than he has yet been, before it is too late.

How soon your Naseby fellow-pilgrim has gone over to the majority !¹ What manner of man was he at bottom ? A really good schoolmaster must be one of the best of citizens in these times.

Ever faithfully yours,

T. S. SPEDDING.

LETTER 15.

Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.

Chelsea,

June 26th, 1842.

DEAR SPEDDING,—Tho' I dwell within a mile or two of the great Premier, and might see the face of him any evening by walking up to his House of Commons, it is doubtful, for all that, whether I am any nearer him than you. Nay some suspect that by clutching his very button, or even taking him by the forelock, and bidding him speak or die, you would still get little nearer *him*,—for that in fact, *he* is a Cagliostro, and has his residence in the extensive country of NOWHERE (not without neighbours) ; or, in plainer words, floats and hovers as a mere Hypothesis, Expediency, and distressed Noah's Raven, studious to descry on what floating carrion he may alight for moments, till the Deluge swallow him and it *as late as possible* ! From no man, Peel nor Anti-Peel, do I hear the smallest whisper of any plan for dealing with the evil day which has at length come upon us. I suppose the people

¹ Dr. Arnold had died on June 12.

will revolt, not willing to die like Hindoos ; and the Government will order out dragoons. A Chartist Parliament, not far in the rear of that, seems likeliest to many : Peel will swiftly thereupon have no difficulty in pointing out a ' peculiar burden ' or two lying upon land ! A Chartist Parliament or any form of Democracy is, with me, equivalent to Anarchy, and what the Yankees call ' Immortal Smash ' : the Chartist Parliament, as all Parliaments at any rate are very diligently doing, having once altogether discredited itself, there enters some kind of Cromwell (would to God we had him !), drives them out with bayonets *à posteriori*,—and we are at sea on the widest chaos, with ' supply and demand ' for a nautical time-keeper, and the ' Greatest Happiness of the greatest number ' for a pole-star ! So sings the Sibyl.

Seriously speaking I do not like to look at the state of England. I can predict nothing of it except that in all likelihood great and long-continued miseries are at no large distance from us. For, as I say in the *old* dialect, not yet speaking readily any other, All men, rich and poor, have forgotten for several generations that there is any God in this universe,—except perhaps some wretched shovel-hatted simulacrum, worse than no God,—and we find now at last, what all mortals in all times have at last found, that such godless hypothesis of this universe is *not true*, that the universe managed in that way becomes unmanageable,—and we, with our expediency, our supply and demand, our greatest happiness principle, and other melancholy stomach-philosophy, are greater asses than they that believed in witch-craft were ! Ah me, the Scotch people say of this or the other man, ' *Thou* wouldst do little for God, if the Devil were dead ' :—and truly it is a kind of comfort to reflect that, at worst, the Devil does never die ; that always there are, at worst, general starvations, chartisms, French Revolutions, with guillotines and apparatus, that Quackery, if it will not disappear otherwise (which one seldom finds it do), may be burnt out of the way by hellfire !

I dare not enter on another sheet ; for indeed I am told Sterling is down stairs. Write to me again, and I will answer. And so adieu for this day ; and good be with you all days.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 16.

*Thomas Carlyle to Thomas Spedding, Greta Bank, Keswick.*Chelsea,
July 31st, 1842.

DEAR SPEDDING,—I here enclose for your behoof certain fragments of New-England Philosophy, in the shape of Reports, by a Yankee Editor, of some late Lectures of friend Emerson's. I know not if you are at all acquainted with friend Emerson: I do not recommend him to you as a great man, who has new illumination for this benighted Universe; but as a notable man, at least as a noticeable man, not without a kind of illumination for himself and a few others. The New-Englanders are a *rustic* people, of simple conditions compared with ours: these Emersonians, I find, having got to see that man in very truth has a soul, and even a religion independent of Socinianism and the Shovel-hat, are forthwith threatening to constitute themselves into some melancholy crotchet of a *Sect*, with all the poor perversions of a *Sect*; the chief tenet, as I understand, being that man ought to live on vegetables, earn therefore his food by three hours daily labour, and live simple and be beautiful under the sky! Emerson, I hear, still hovers on the edge; but several of his disciples have already gone in, and welter there neck and heels. A man named Alcott is come over in these very days for proselytes; has already parted in downright wrath with me, because I defended myself with quizzing; and is on the whole one of the strangest Potato Quixotes I ever fell in with. An elderly long thin man, with small irritable chin, with grey worn temples, mild sorrowful intelligent eyes, and the completest faith in man's salvation by vegetables; loveable, yet on the whole a frightful bore. The young Socinian Ministry, he tells me, are all quitting their pulpits in New England; taking to the fields and farms;—as indeed they may well do, Socinianism being now palpably a ghost. We live generally 'in the twelfth hour of the night.'

You are surely correct in what you say of Stomach-Philosophy, That the great mass of men have in all times guided themselves forward by it and by little else. Nay even the chosen few, if not in a state of spasmodic antagonism, an undesirable state, have always had to mind it very constantly withal,—to admit the entirely un-

deniable fact that *they* had bodies, &c., and that the great majority of neighbours had nothing else ! This is true ; and yet when the great majority becomes as it were the entire mass of society, to which in highest Cathedrals or elsewhere you shall vainly look for an exception, we have frightful times of it. These same *few* have ever been as the salt of the earth ; and if the salt have lost its savour, if there be no more salt—? No society that I ever heard of, Roman, Arab, Christian, Chinese, could subsist on Cant and Benthamism, never so cunningly blended ; but had either to get new ways of believing, the initiatory of new ways of acting, or else to rush down into nameless wreck and putrefaction. The Englishman believes that he has *done* with his fellow creature, when he has paid him his money wages ; he asks Cain-like, Am I my brother's keeper ? and thinks it much if he subscribe to some soup-kitchen. . . .

We are an unexampled people. A man speaks of 'Hell,' &c. : but what is the actual thing he is *infinitely* afraid of, and struggles with the whole soul of him to avoid ? It is what he calls 'not succeeding,' which, being interpreted, means—what we know. I say in brief, and God knows what volumes, controversies and confused battles the said *brevity* may turn out to include : This is verily not the fact of God's universe ; God did not make his universe so, but far otherwise than so ; and what nation or what man soever pleases to go on the hypothesis that it *is* so made, such man or nation is incessantly tending towards the *land's-end*, the end of reality and fact, and after more or fewer steps, will (unless he wisely recoil first) *step into the air*, and find Chaos and the Devil perfectly ready for him !—Is not this a dainty prospect ? I believe in the continued vitality of the Devil ; and therefore have no fear that what I call God can ever be abolished, or hidden long. But in the meanwhile our prospects are but frightful in this country, I think. So frightful that I oftenest turn my eyes away from them ;—and will not speak another word on the subject at present, for one thing.

Alas, there is no hope of me in the North this year : I must doom myself to silence, to solitude,—for which there is no place that I know of properer than London in these coming months. I deserve no better doom.

The Legation Secretary has hardly ever written to me ; but I hear by the Newspapers that he is fast approaching ; and already pride myself in the meeting.—My poor Wife continues very sad

and weak, inconsolable for the loss of her Mother. I am getting her persuaded into Suffolk for a [*rest wanting*].¹

P.S.—You may send these Lectures over to Elder Mr. Marshall,—or to whom you will.

¹ A bit of this letter has been lost. Mrs. Carlyle accepted an invitation to the Rectory at Troston, Suffolk, where Mr. and Mrs. Buller were staying with their youngest son, the Rev. Reginald Buller, incumbent there.

(*To be continued*).

SLEEP.

SLEEP, gentle heart, for dawn is in the sky ;
 Shut books, put out the light, voluptuously
 Stretch the white sheet, and turn deliciously
 Your face to the wide window as you lie.
 Think, in life's loveliness, before you sleep,
 All this content, all this, at least is Me,
 Saved from day's maddening snare, a harmony,—
 Then dive and drift and fade into the deep.

Now steal we softly forth, sleep wanderer :
 Elusive dreamer, pluck your liveliest blooms ;
 Blue hyacinths and buds that star the glooms
 Of sleepful fields. Hush ! speed we, gatherer,
 -Lest a far cock affright the morning star . . .
 Lest day should see how beautiful you are !

EIRENE WILLIAMS.

GOLF MARGINALIA.

BY HIS HONOUR JUDGE PARRY.

‘Take the honour. What is it?’

(Merry Wives of Windsor, II. i.)

CHARLES LAMB used to say that a book reads the better which is our own, so ‘that we know the topography of its blots and dog’s-ears, and can trace the dirt in it to having read it at tea with buttered muffins or over a pipe.’ But the main privilege of ownership is that it enables one with a clear conscience to make those pencil marginalia which lead, on second readings, to pleasant re-discoveries.

In a recent convalescence that invited the desultory reading of many half-forgotten volumes I came across several curious allusions to the game of golf, which I remember I had long ago promised myself the pleasure of collecting and setting down for the entertainment of those who love both golf and letters.

In an interesting but alas! unindexed volume entitled ‘Shakespeare’s Europe 1903,’ which consists of many hitherto unpublished chapters of Fynes Moryson’s Itinerary, I find I have two valuable golf marginalia from the historical point of view. There is no reason to suppose that Moryson had ever seen or heard of the game of golf, yet his close powers of observation and graphic accuracy of description leave you in no doubt about the game he is describing.

Moryson was at Leyden in the winter of 1592, and writing a chapter of the pastimes and exercises of the people at this season when all are ‘slyding upon yce with Iron in their wooden Pattens,’ he goes on to speak of a strange game which he had evidently observed with some curiosity.

‘They have,’ he writes, ‘a Common Pastyme and exercise to dryue a little ball through the feildes and vpon the Ice, with a sticke of wood turning in at the lowe end, like the basting ladells we vse in kichens, saue that they are not made hollowe but are rounde in the end, and this sporte I haue seene frequently vsed not only by boyes and young men, but by men of 40 yeares age and vpward.’

It may be said that this adds little to our knowledge of the history of the game since many early Dutch painters have portrayed the scene that interested the observant Moryson. But later on, in 1594, when the traveller was in Italy, he comes across the strange game once again in a most unlikely locality, for he tells us that

‘at Naples I haue seene gentlemen play in the playne with a little ball and a sticke like a basting ladell, to driue it before them, which sporte the Hollanders much vse upon the yce in Winter.’

That the game was played by the gentlemen of Southern Italy at this date is not, I think, generally known. It would be interesting to ascertain if other early travellers have reported the game from other parts of Europe.

The early beginnings of golf in different parts of the world seem to be wrapped in unnecessary mystery. One often reads the statement that James I played golf at Blackheath, but is there any authority for it? Did James care about golf, and did he bring his clubs down from Scotland when he became King of England? I have grave doubt about it. But that his son Prince Henry was keen about the game I have no doubt at all. The fact that Sir Simond D’Ewes says in his Autobiography that ‘he was a prince rather addicted to martial studies and exercises than to goff or other boy’s play,’ merely proves how eager that dull pedant and Puritan was to ignore the popular reputation of the Prince as a sportsman. It is the ignorant contempt of a south country high-brow for a game introduced from the North that he can neither play nor appreciate.

Prince Henry was always a keen player of both golf and tennis. Isaac D’Israeli, in his ‘Curiosities of Literature,’ has a pleasant anecdote of the Prince and his tutor, Adam Newton.

‘Newton was sometimes severe in his chastisement; for when the Prince was playing at goff, and having warned his tutor, who was standing by in conversation, that he was going to strike the ball, and having lifted up the goff-club, someone observing, “Beware, sir, that you hit not Mr. Newton!” the Prince drew back the club, but smilingly observed, “Had I done so, I had but paid my debts.”’

Newton, who was not a Scotsman and may not have understood the etiquette of the game, became in after years Dean of Durham in spite of his indiscretion of ‘standing by in conversation’ whilst

a prince was striking off. Chattering on the tee is not a nuisance of modern origin, but has probably been a rub of the green since the early days of golf.

That Prince Henry played golf in the neighbourhood of London is very probable, but I have no marginalia locating any links in the suburbs until 1758, when I find in the Autobiography of Alexander Carlyle a curious account of a game played at Molesley Hurst in Surrey.

The Reverend Doctor Alexander Carlyle, minister of Inveresk, was a friend of John Home, the author of 'Douglas,' Robertson the historian, David Hume, Smollett, and the best-known men of law, letters, and divinity in Edinburgh, and was also well received in similar circles in London. He was a comely man of commanding presence, 'the grandest demi-god I ever saw,' says Sir Walter Scott, 'and was commonly called Jupiter Carlyle, from having sat more than once for the king of gods and men to Gavin Hamilton.' He says himself that he excelled at golf and took great pleasure in it, and from his build and physique he may well have been a powerful driver. He seems to have become acquainted with Garrick, probably through his friend John Home, and on a visit to London in 1758 the actor 'gave a dinner to his friends and companions at his house at Hampton which he did but seldom. He had told us to bring golf clubs and balls that we might play at that game on Molesley Hurst.' The fact that Garrick knew there was such a game seems to suggest that there was a regular links at Molesley at this date. The party consisted of Carlyle, John Home, Robertson, Alexander Wedderburn (afterwards Lord Chancellor, then just called to the English Bar), his brother Colonel David Wedderburn, and Robert and James Adam, the architects. They set out in good time, says Carlyle,

'six of us in a landau. As we passed through Kensington the Coldstream regiment were changing guard, and on seeing our clubs they gave us three cheers in honour of a diversion peculiar to Scotland; so much does the remembrance of one's native country dilate the heart when one has been some time absent. The same sentiment made us open our purses and give our countrymen wherewithal to drink "The Land o' Cakes." Garrick met us by the way, so impatient he seemed to be for his company.'

There were only three players, Parson Black, the Vicar of Hampton, an Aberdonian who may have started golf at Molesley,

and John Home and Carlyle himself, who tells us that 'immediately after we arrived we crossed the river to the golfing ground which was very good.' After the match, of which, unhappily, there is no description, they returned to Garrick's to dinner, and after dinner Garrick, out of compliment to Home, ordered the wine to be carried out into his temple in the garden where the statue of Shakespeare was erected. This was the statue for which Garrick had sat to Roubillac and recently purchased from the sculptor for three hundred guineas.

Carlyle was perhaps a little peeved at so much attention being shown to Home, and made use of his skill at golf to emphasise his own importance.

'Having observed,' he writes, 'a green mount in the garden opposite the archway, I said to our landlord that while the servants were preparing the collation in the temple I would surprise him with a stroke at the golf as I should drive a ball through his archway into the Thames once in three strokes. I had measured with my eye in walking about the garden, and accordingly at the second stroke made the ball alight in the mouth of the gateway and roll down the green slope into the river. This was so dexterous that he was quite surprised and begged the club of me by which such a feat had been performed.'

Whether the club was a cleek or a baffy, whether the ball was retrieved or is still rolling along the bed of the river, whether Garrick himself ever took the club out afterwards and had a knock on Molesley Hurst—these are matters upon which diligent research has thrown no light.

I have been puzzled to find in my marginalia so few allusions to golf in the early novelists. The fact seems to be that they did not themselves play games, and wrote for a generation of readers who cared for none of these things.

Smollett refers to the game casually, and there are several allusions in the Waverley novels to the game, though I am not aware that Sir Walter ever played it, nor, indeed, does he seem to have understood how it was played. In 'Redgauntlet' Mr. Saunders Fairford, who is said to be a portrait of the author's father, was an old golfer, and, as Alan writes to his friend, 'sometimes draws his similes from his once favourite game.' Thus he says: 'All that is managed for ye like a tee'd ball,' and when he is sending away the troublesome Peter Peebles: 'I'll get him off on the instant like a gowff ba'. Neither comparison seems very

apt, and when we turn to the preface of 'The Surgeon's Daughter' there seems little doubt that Sir Walter had no clear notion of the true inwardness of the game. Mr. Croftangry had lent his MS. to his friend Mr. Fairscribe, and is impatiently waiting for the latter's arrival that he may hear his verdict.

'At last my friend arrived, a little overheated. He had been taking a turn at golf, to prepare him for "colloquy sublime." And wherefore not? since the game, with its variety of odds, lengths, bunkers, tee'd balls, and so on, may be no inadequate representation of the hazards attending literary pursuits. In particular, those formidable buffets, which make one ball spin through the air like a rifle-shot, and strike another down into the very earth it is placed upon, by the maladroitness or the malicious purpose of the player—what are they but parallels to the favourable or depreciating notices of the reviewers, who play at golf with the publications of the season, even as Altisidora, in her approach to the gates of the infernal regions, saw the devils playing at racket with the new books of Cervantes' days?'

The idea that a golfer strikes a golf ball into the very earth with malicious intent, as a reviewer slates a book, suggests to my mind that Scott thought that it was part of the game for one golfer to deliberately injure his adversary's lie, and that it was not present to his mind that at golf each player strictly confines his industry to his own ball under the sanction of severe penalties. Novelists, however, are subject to no laws which prevent them writing about matters they do not understand, else would much pleasant literature be lost to the world.

Maria Edgeworth knew even less about golf than Sir Walter. In 'Forester,' one of her well-known Moral Tales written about a hundred years ago, the scene is laid in Edinburgh where the well-to-do hero is under the roof of the good and respectable Dr. Campbell. Forester, however, having wild and communistic ideas, runs away to earn his own living and goes to work for a low-minded gardener. The gardener has a son named Colin, and Forester seeks to make a friend of him. Miss Edgeworth proceeds to tell us that

'Colin's favourite holiday's diversion was playing at *goff*; this game, which is played with a bat loaded with lead, and with a ball which is harder than a cricket ball, requires much strength and dexterity. Forester used, sometimes, to accompany the gardener's son to the Links (a lee or common near Edinburgh) where numbers

of people of different descriptions are frequently seen practising this diversion. Our hero was ambitious of excelling at the game of *goff*, and, as he was not particularly adroit, he exposed himself, in his first attempts, to the derision of the spectators, and he likewise received several severe blows. Colin laughed at him without mercy Forester soon took an aversion to the game of *goff*.'

Played as described, poor Forester might well see little amusement in the 'game of *goff*.' One cannot help thinking that Miss Edgeworth may have seen the game played on The Braids on a crowded afternoon without understanding what it was all about, for it would be interesting to know how she supposed Forester received several hard blows. She evidently regarded it as a rough game played by common people, and used its imaginary dangers to cure her young hero of a communistic appetite for low pursuits in low company.

That Edinburgh golfers, like all true followers of the Royal and Ancient Game, knew no class distinction is clear from the fact that among the celebrated judges, ministers, and doctors of the eighteenth century caricatured in that interesting volume, 'Kay's Edinburgh Portraits,' you may find an etching of Alexander McKellar, the Cock o' the Green, a retired butler who neglected a small tavern in pursuit of the higher life of golf. Mr. Paterson's memoirs of Alexander and his chapter on Edinburgh golf in the letterpress of the volume contain many interesting marginalia of Scots golf. McKellar was a respected Edinburgh worthy, and his favourite expression as he walked up to a perfect lie: 'By gracious, this won't go for nothing!' became a favourite phrase on the links.

A vivid picture of the golfing community of St. Andrews as Lord Cockburn saw it when he went the North Circuit in the spring of 1844 has a very modern ring about it. Cockburn's 'Circuit Journeys' is not a mere record of legal work, but contains interesting pictures of Scots life of the day by a shrewd observer.

'The people of St. Andrews,' he says, 'have a local pleasure of their own, which is as much the staple of the place as old colleges and churches are. This is golfing, which is here not a mere pastime but a business and a passion, and has for ages been so, owing probably to their admirable links. This pursuit actually draws many a middle-aged gentleman whose stomach requires exercise, and his purse cheap pleasure, to reside here with his family; and it is the established recreation of all the learning and all the dignity

of the town. There is a pretty large set who do nothing else, who begin in the morning and stop only for dinner; and who, after practising the game in the breeze all day, discuss it all night. Their talk is of holes. The intermixture of these men, or rather the intermixture of this occupation, with its interests, and hazards, and matches, considerably whets the social appetite. And the result is, that their meetings are very numerous, and that, on the whole, they are rather a guttling population. However, it is all done quietly, innocently, and respectably; insomuch, that even the recreation of the place partakes of what is, and ought to be, its peculiar character and avocation.'

Fifty years earlier than this John Campbell, our own Lord Chancellor, had played golf at St. Andrews when he was at the University there, and characteristically noted that: 'Although never an enthusiast in this or any other game I think it is much superior to the English cricket, which is too violent and gives no opportunity for conversation'—a demerit in cricket which could only have occurred to the mind of a Scots student.

Charles Kingsley, in a letter to his wife written in modern days from the same city, views these high matters in saner perspective and with a nobler charity when he delivers this message to his son: 'Tell Maurice golf is the queen of games if cricket is the king; and the golfing gentlemen as fine fellows as ever I saw.' A verdict which should satisfy the most devoted follower of the Royal and Ancient Game.

I refrain from setting down more modern marginalia, but it is perhaps interesting to note that as late as 1892, when Stevenson published 'Catriona,' he thought well to add an explanatory footnote as to the meaning of the title of his chapter 'The Tee'd Ball.' I take leave to think that such a note to-day would be as redundant as if an author when he wrote of his hero 'getting out of a scrape,' were to explain in a note that his imagery was founded on the golfing rule relating to rabbit scrapes. For to-day we are all versed in the language of the queen of games.

ANGEL ALLEY.

BY CHARLES FLETCHER.

I.

THIS is the tale of a Club, the Angel Alley Boys' Club, which existed once in a quiet part of the city, remote from curious observation, living a little life of its own—which life, some have tried to persuade me, was not exactly what I have described here. But I maintain that it differs from it no more than two London boys differ from one another when you see them down the street in the fog; that the two are indistinguishable. And if it be my eyes that cannot distinguish them, then that is my affair, and no one else's. With which proviso we will leave talk and laughter and society and reality and the British Empire, and emerge into the street. For the clock has struck eight, and it is time. 'I suppose you comes 'ere as a 'obby,' once said an urchin to me. I suppose I do.

Out then, into the wet. The main thoroughfare is teeming with life—life and light and clamour, and shifting, shiftless crowds with indifferent pale faces; booths, brilliantly lit restaurants, glowing chestnut stoves, mud. A city of strangers and foreigners, cheerful and various. A brief plunge into this, and then away down a side street into emptiness and stealthy gloom—a street curiously respectable but for the stealth of the few figures that pass. These people are very likely the same people as are met with every day in trams and buses; but have you not noticed how the night, and the place, and the thought in your mind, alter things in a way quite important and real? Of all the war correspondents and soldier authors who wrote about the Front, not one has commented on this—that as you tramped along the last mile, or two miles, leading from reality to the front-line trenches, you passed into another world, and your whole psychology changed. And especially was this so at night.

At the end of the side street life begins again in one of the immensely long narrow streets near to the docks, but a life less familiar and a little sinister. There are shops open still at eight

o'clock, and a lorry or two about, or a pair of cart-horses being led along to a neighbouring stable, and men and women are passing, still bound on their business or setting out for the evening. But there is a tendency down here to draw together in groups and carry on furtive consultations, or to loiter in twos and threes whispering, with significant gestures; and it has its effect. Hard faces—brutal, insolent and vicious faces—black faces pass, and do not care to look you in the eyes, nor you them, that you may not appear inquisitive. Talk ceases as you draw near, and doors close—close, not like an ordinary door, but as if someone had looked out to see whether there was a gale of wind and rain, and found there was. And the effect is one of utter isolation and distrust. Distrust indeed is in the air.

A knot of loafers are leaning against the wall by a public-house, —a place so small, so cramped and dirty, that it hardly looks worth while trying to get into it, even for beer, so little pleasure can there be in the act of drinking there. Beyond it, a haze of light shows a cinema house, which a Club boy told me was rather too unclean to patronise. Not that I ever intended it.

It is here, by the public-house, that you turn down. This is Angel Alley, this passage which opens out a little and is almost dark, but is much preferable to the street out of which you turn. Pennington Place is on the right, an alfresco stone terrace twelve feet wide, where you can play ring-a-ring-o'-roses by moonlight, or sit, legs dangling over the edge. And opposite it is Clark's Row, which has back gardens with wooden palings, such as they are. I like Angel Alley for the quiet of it, and the solid little houses, with good doors and wooden window-shutters, and because in a sense custom long ago made it mine. For Angel Alley Boys' Club is in Angel Alley.

Some of the boys were amongst the loiterers round the public-house, too busy to pass a greeting, or at most to give more than a nod. They will come in later. As you walk down the alley two or three more join you, having exuded from the wall or the pavement in a manner of their own; while away down the passage a little clump is gathered round the door of the Club looking like a small heap of dead leaves, or rubbish, that somebody has swept together. Or two flying figures leap at you out of the dark with 'First game of billiards, me and Westbrook.' There are some shouts, pushing, a hammering on the door, calls through the key-hole for 'Mr. Harperr! Mr. Harperr!' (the Club-keeper's name

is Mitchell), a mad scramble through the door into the gaslight, and instantly the Club is in full swing.

*'Hinc via, Tartarei quae fert Acherontis ad undas:
Turbidus hic coeno vastaque voragine gurgis
Aestuat, atque omnem Cocyto eructat arenam.'*

When all is over and the last boy has left, or been thrown out, and has died away down the street, Angel Alley is empty again, and dim, and unreal; the strange, intimate, unnatural phantasmagoria is over—the look of an eye, a smile, a handclasp are all that remain. A moment you stand at the threshold and look round you at the squalor and the fog, or upwards at the fast-travelling torn clouds, and the stars, and feel sad, or triumphant, or bewildered, or desperate, or indifferent, according to the sort of evening it has been, and your own method of reaction to Boy. And then it is time to go home.

'But O the gold nights and the scented ways.'

The public-houses have closed now, and the street has wakened up for its final effort, and become much more sinister. The groups are bigger, and there are double policemen at the by-ways. A good few coloured men are always about here, and there is always a chance of evil passions boiling over into excitement. The moment is ticklish, but if there is a fight it will probably be only a drunken affair on a small scale, which is easily damped down. And you pick your way through broken bits of conversation, all of the quarrelsome sort, to the corner of the railway bridge, which is at the end of the shell-holed area. Soon you are back in civilised London—the London of the tramway lines—which has quietened down, and looks like a fancy dress ball the morning after. Forget about slime and grime and drunken bawling. Forget about double policemen, larger than life, waiting there silently till somebody thinks fit to begin. Forget about Nash and Underwood and Fagin, Dicky Kellis and one-eyed Hall, drifting home now in silence like sticks on a canal! That is phantasmagoria, and it is all over.

II.

Angel Alley Boys' Club in my time was a Club with a reputation. Other Boys' Clubs in the neighbourhood, which is a sufficiently rough one, were, rumour said, orderly and did obvious good. Angel Alley was different. Sociologically speaking, the wisest

heads shook when they referred to it, wishing thereby to convey the fact that as an organisation it had no purpose and fulfilled no function. Ecclesiastically they affirmed that it had no religion—why, it hadn't even a moral basis, and its games were played with an entire absence of sportsmanlike feeling! But it had vitality. If you let them, boys swarmed into it like flies into a butcher's shop—boys who said they were fourteen when they were obviously nine, or who said they were sixteen when they were obviously twenty-three—and when they got there they were entirely vital. And if you let them, boys who had been there once brought along with them vital boys who had never been there before.

Legends grew up, which is always a sign of grace. At Angel Alley, so the legend ran, it was a common thing for the members to throw billiard balls at you, and dead rats. Dead rats were quite certainly saved up for weeks in order that there might be enough to make a jolly evening. A popular proceeding was to pin a newspaper to the coat-tails of strangers and set fire to it with a match. Or the door would suddenly be kicked open and ash-bins come sailing through to spread their contents on the middle of the floor. It was even alleged that evilly-addicted fathers sent their little sons there to learn the subtleties of crime. In discussions between the men who ran troops of Scouts in that district they frankly admitted that there were times when the only way to produce an impression was to seize a Wolf Cub by the nearest limb, and hurl him against the wall. It was different at Angel Alley. There the air was perpetually so thick with boys that they resembled the cone of fire from a platoon firing ten rounds rapid.

This was rather disconcerting for visitors, I am afraid, and any stranger who could be lured into visiting the Club, after hearing the legend, came like Milton's serpent—

‘With tract oblique

At first, as one who sought access, but feared
To interrupt’;

and too often the vision of his unhappy face, as he gazed upon such splendid material galloping to destruction for want of better management, made one inclined, when he had had about an hour of it, to exclaim with Adam :

‘Go, for thy stay not free absents thee more.’

How one has wished, all those nights, for some Superman to come along and mould that splendid material to his whim, and so imbue the Club with a moral purpose that visitors might think it worth a long journey to come down there and gain instruction, and Angel Alley blossom in the wilderness like a pear-tree! To think of Davis and Bousfield and Drew, Foley and the one-eyed Hall, and all those other little rips drinking in instruction in citizenship and playing organised games with the restraint and *élan*, the corporate feeling and absorption, that the sociologist in you aspires after!

How, far short of that, one has wished for somebody to come at all, except as critic, and help amuse the youngsters, teach them to box, teach them anything, but especially, if it were possible, the two things in the world that they know least about—moral obligation and a measure of disinterestedness.

But alas!

πάντας δ' ἐλέγξας καὶ διεξελθὼν φίλους,
οὐχ εὔρε πλὴν γυναικὸς ὅστις ᾔθελε
θανὼν πρὸ κείνου μηκέτ' εἰσορᾶν φάος.

But I will make you a freeman of Angel Alley and introduce you to the Club.

III.

The Club opens shortly before eight with a headlong rush of boys through the door and a plunge into business. Fagin and McCarthy seize the cover of the billiard-table and toss it aside; Bousfield and Westbrook, Hall and Davis push into the cupboard as pigs into a trough and tear out its contents—boxing-gloves, billiard cues, and draught-boards; Hageman tears off the baize cover of the piano and begins to play that dreadful tune with one finger that only he can play, but is quickly and utterly prevented; and Dicky Kellis goes straight away by himself to a corner of the far room, and puts on rubber shoes, in preparation for one of his evenings of persistent dumb gymnastics or persistent dumb boxing. He is a strange creature, Dicky Kellis—sensitive and solitary, proud as Lucifer, and with a pathetic side to him. He is Irish. He never wants telling what he might or should do. He knows and does it, or does not do it, very definitely. But with art he may be wheedled *malgré lui*, and if he can be got to say 'might do,' it is

odds but he will. Little humour he has, and that little devilish, but he understands courtesy by instinct and resists force with violence. I have a great admiration for Dicky Kellis, because he does something all the time he is at the Club, with all his strength and soul, and is less often a nuisance than anybody in it. For the others can scarcely be got to do anything for more than a minute: their minds are a prey to every passing suggestion, and they are fond of lounging idly about, in a state of passivity mischief-ripe. This is their usual state, which is varied with bouts of contagious rioting, and afterwards, generally the next night, a moment, a little resting-place and respite, of sinless harmony. It is then that you begin to think your work is bearing fruit.

Fagin is the doyen of the Club. He wears riding-breeches, pays half subscription, and is about the size of a cock-sparrow. Gloomy perhaps to a fault, he holds out little hope of the Club's coming to a good end under the present regime, but is a pretty boxer, and full of sport, were he not so small. For is he not momentarily, almost certainly, the brother-in-law of Jimmy Corp, who wins four fights a week? And does he not every now and again bring Jimmy to the Club, on one of the other two nights, to let budding talent punch the air, where it thought—poor budding talent!—that Jimmy Corp's head was? On these occasions there is no need for a watchful eye or policing of any kind. All the boys in the Club will sit for hours watching Jimmy Corp, or any real professional, box—'their eyes,' as Nash would say, 'bubbling out of their heads'; and everyone would tell you that there wasn't a boxer in London could beat him, unless—and then they would name all the other boxers' names they knew. Jimmy was, I must say, worth watching. He boxed in the East End way, with his feet and his head, ducking to a surprising extent, giving his opponent a Parthian flip backwards as they broke away from a complicated intertwining clinch, and then standing, doubled in two, with his gloves over his ears, while the other man wasted his strength and hit him till he discovered he wasn't hurting him at all, and drew away. Then Jimmy would arise, shake back his hair, and put in the hard and clever blow he had waited for. During the rests he paced the ring as a tiger its cage, so tireless was he. And Fagin, too, paced the ring during the rests.

Hageman was a rather popular member of the Club, and a most useful football player, until he left school and went to his aunt's pub. Whether he had an aunt in reality, and where her pub was,

are matters I never could get to know. Accounts varied—his mother's and father's most of all. For beer stared out of their eyes in a hopeless and defiant fashion. That he was in beer somewhere seemed probable, or certain. To get him out of beer, prolonged looking into Mrs. Hageman's eyes, and prolonged listening to Mrs. Hageman's shifty talking, convinced you was impossible. He had vanished, rumour said in the direction of Hackney, and never came back at night. One cannot search all the public-houses in East London. A policeman convinced me of that when I asked him if he knew many.

By about half-past eight the Club begins to get full. There is not much to amuse twenty boys—a few games, boxing-gloves, a horse, and parallel bars. They must amuse themselves, and are bad at it, and you must see that they do not amuse themselves too much at your expense. The best way is to smile. An irritable mood travels round the room quicker than news among the Australian blacks, and is met with derision. Smile or go mad. There is no middle way. How much I have envied those strong silent equable men with a twinkle in their eye, or those fat compact little men with a bubbling good humour who manage a room full of boys with almost no effort. Club management is, in truth, a physical, unconscious gift, and most of the effect produced is unconscious. And I suppose the golden rule is to be always the same. Then the boy will in time regard you as a boat regards the post it is tied to, or as a dog regards the mat on which it curls itself up to sleep—whichever you like best.

I have tried organising games, from musical chairs to tug-of-war, in order to focus somehow the loose energy that was travelling round the room at several miles an hour. And I was irreverently and irresistibly reminded of Kaa's hunting in the 'Jungle Book,' and of Mowgli in the Cold Lairs among the Bandar Log teaching them to plait straw, and of Baloo.

'Listen, man-cub,' said the Bear, and his voice rumbled like thunder on a hot night. 'I have taught thee all the Law of the Jungle for all the peoples of the Jungle—except the Monkey-Folk who live in the trees. They have no law. They are outcasts. They have no speech of their own, but use the stolen words which they overhear when they listen, and peep, and wait up above in the branches. Their way is not our way. They are without leaders. They have no remembrance. They boast and chatter and pretend that they are a great people about to do great affairs in

the Jungle, but the falling of a nut turns their minds to laughter, and all is forgotten.

'The Jungle-people put them out of their mouths and out of their minds. They are very many, evil, dirty, shameless, and they desire, if they have any fixed desire, to be noticed by the Jungle-people. But we do *not* notice them, even when they throw nuts and filth on our heads.'

Baloo, I think, must have been a capitalist.

The East End boy is never an individual, or scarcely ever. He is one of a pair of mates, and in dealing with him you must take account of this. Davis and Hall have moods in common, will lend each other money, and are always to be found in close proximity. If one gets tired of cutting corks, and takes to sorting rags, the other finds he is tired of cutting corks too. So it was with Westbrook and McCarthy, with Bousfield and Hutchinson, and the rest. If you threw out Westbrook, McCarthy went home, and possibly Drew turned on the tap of passion and threatened never to come near the place again. If you thought Bousfield wasn't worth a place in the football team and said so, it was decisively pointed out that if he didn't play neither would Drew, Hutchinson, or Westbrook. Such combinations, once known, can be checkmated or sublimated, but unknown lead to neurasthenia. For long I was never able to tell Drew, Westbrook, and McCarthy apart. But time brings its illumination. Suddenly I discovered that Drew's face was like a lump of putty with a blob of blacking in the middle, and that Westbrook was employed by a railway company and wore a topcoat with the familiar red beading on it, both on the football field and at the Club. And McCarthy suddenly bought a loud new suit. And mistakes gave place to wonder that I could ever have mistaken them.

To this day I remember I am under a solemn promise to McCarthy that when I buy a little blood mare that dances he shall come and be my groom. To this day I have never met so small a thing with so hoarse a voice as Westbrook, or anything so large as Drew that could disappear so completely and instantly when particularly wanted. Poor Drew! When any good gift was in the wind, there was he in the forefront of the fighters, clamouring for it. When there was a crash and dust, there was he in the middle of it, with his face screwed with pain, and his body writhing, till they laid him on a table and twisted his ears. Night after

night when the Club has emptied, Drew would have to be hauled out from under the piano or the back of a cupboard shelf. Night after night when Drew has been violently ejected, suppressed laughter and inordinate calm has told me that somewhere in a dark, or damp, or most uncomfortable corner of the Club Drew has been long in hiding. He took delight in it, and in those fierce bursts of passion which shouted to the stars that Drew had been wronged and would one day be vindicated. But then, in a little he would change, the look of hate would go, and the two sparks come back into his eyes which made them the most friendly and humorous eyes in London. Not a very strong character, Drew's, that ever I could discover, and yet—

‘I do not love thee, no, I do not love thee,
And yet when thou art absent, I am sad.’

Club-life of the Angel Alley sort is strictly a night life and, as I have said, has the element of phantasmagoria about it. You rarely meet the boys except, so to speak, in chiaroscuro, or on the passion-charged stage of a football ground. Of what the alley looks like in the daylight hours I have very little idea. No doubt the women whose faces peer out of the door cracks come boldly forth then, and chide, and gossip. And the cats, which at night slink around corners on their dreadful business of trying to live without dying, sit and wash their faces, out of tradition merely. And the young brothers and sisters of the Club members play in the gutter (there is but one) with nuts or peg-tops or road filth; or sit dumbly and watch the procession of the street, bringing their rude and infantile consciousness to bear on the immense joy of living. From what I have seen of it, I prefer the alley and those parts at night, and the Club by gaslight. But it is as well to remember that those boys whose crookedness and humour and cheerfulness and super-abundant pluck, patience and vitality have ended by driving you to an amused despair—whom you could willingly thump till you were tired and trust with gold watches till you met them again—are real boys with fathers and mothers and homes and sorrows and consciences, all real, who work during the day, sometimes quite seriously, and bear evils quite as a matter of course which would disable you in a fortnight; that the virtues you admire and the vices which you perfectly detest in them are weapons which they use to cut through a way vastly

more difficult than yours ; that they come to a Club for three things—for somewhere to go, for football, and to see what they can get out of you. You can do little for them—almost nothing perhaps, and that little takes long. But still they come—the boys to whom the idea of Boy Scouts is repugnant. And for every one who comes, there are fifty who do not, because there are not enough Clubs for them to come to.

(To be continued.)

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

BY H. C.

SOME people, I suppose, are chicken keepers from birth; some, no doubt, acquire chickens; others—like ourselves—have chickens thrust upon them. It happened in this wise. Our keeper was a man well over the military age when war began, but was under fifty in the spring of 1918. My wife (whom her intimate friends call Mary), finding in 1916 that the war was still going on, and likely to go on, and that I, her husband, was planted at the far end of the Mediterranean, where you obtained leave once every two years, if you were lucky, or knew a General; finding, moreover, that there were not many pheasants left, and no one to shoot them if there had been, she determined to turn George, the keeper, into a chicken farmer, whereby the food supplies of the country would be strengthened, and George (to say nothing of his wife and family) would once more have some useful work to do—a neat right and left.

The plan worked quite well for some time. George, if not exactly enthusiastic about chickens, thought he was doing his bit, and that he was supplying eggs for the firing-line; there was no difficulty about getting grain for the birds, as all the farmers took care that a certain proportion of their corn should be able to be sold as 'damaged'—very naturally, as it fetched a much higher price than the controlled stuff, which was only fit for human consumption; not much extra apparatus was wanted, as coops and wired-in nurseries for young pheasants are capital habitations for little chickens. Mary took in *The Poultry World*, talked learnedly about Measures cocks, and Goodden pullets, and was convinced she was making our fortunes. 'Eggs for the firing-line' did not appeal to her much—perhaps because I was in Egypt, the land of eggs, and not in France. I ought to say that she had been broken to chickens when quite young, by her mother, and did not start quite 'ab ovo.' Still, she had been out of practice for a good many years, and George was a keeper, not a chicken man.

Nevertheless, between them they had worked up a considerable business, and when I came home for good in the winter of 1917-18, the half-eaten prey of several different varieties of Oriental

microbes, with my soldiering all behind me, I found a very creditable establishment in existence, down at George's, about half a mile away from our house. Here, in that glorious spring weather, when the Germans were battering at the gates of Amiens, we almost forgot the war in the absorbing interest of looking over and criticising the rising generation of cockerels and pullets. George did all the hard work ; he was 'Q' Branch and Sanitary squad, Supply and Medical services all rolled into one. In fact, he was in sole command of 400 little chickens. Mary did the staff-work, and I looked on and applauded—though Mary, like most staff-officers, was sometimes rude when I offered advice gratis. Little did we reckon of the impending crisis—on the home front, I mean.

'Age limit raised,' I read in the morning paper.

'Good gracious,' said Mary, 'they can't take George.'

'They can, and will,' I said. 'Also Wall and Isaacson.' (These were the coachman and the gardener—both men of about fifty.)

'Vive the Old Guard ! But what are we to do,' moaned Mary. 'That will leave no one but Jim and the boy in the garden, and Jim's mad.'

'It's not the garden I'm worrying about so much,' I retorted, 'but if Wall goes, who is to look after my young horses ?'

'Bother your young horses ; they can look after themselves in a field. What about the chickens ?'

I could only groan. 'Four hundred little chickens,' I murmured, 'it will be a holocaust.'

'A what ?'

'I mean they will all have to be given the happy despatch.' (Of course I didn't mean it really, but at times we are all possessed with a mocking demon.) Mary was too stirred up to reply. 'Chickens, horses, and garden, all sacrificed to the beastly Boche,' I went on ; but then Mary boiled over and had to be comforted. It's funny how little things bite, sometimes. We had got over our various partings since that August of 1914 (when it was usually a slight shade of odds that we should never see each other again) quite dry-eyed and respectably. Yet here we were, profoundly moved over the fate of 400 baby fowls. 'We will save them somehow, even if we have to look after them ourselves,' I assured her.

We were luckier than most of our neighbours. Wall and

Isaacson were rejected altogether, to their relief and ours (we were not unpatriotic, but the guilt *was* rather off the ginger-bread in 1918, and we had all got used to doing what we were told to do and leaving it at that)—but George, alas ! was classed as B2, or something of the kind, and was told he would be called up in ten days' time.

Great was the emergency, but Mary (and I) rose grandly to meet it. The whole strength of an attenuated establishment worked day and night at cutting posts, taking down wire-netting wherever it could be found and putting it up again, making run-doors, patching up any old wooden conglomerate that might shelter birds, and erecting the whole clamjamfry—where do you think ?—on the lawn almost in front of the house ! 'It will do the lawn good, in the end,' we assured ourselves. 'Guano is magnificent for tennis-courts.' It was a poor consolation.

George received his papers—though he never fought for his country. He was posted to an Agricultural Labour battalion, and contrived, not without a little pulling of wires, to be applied for by a farmer near the village, who had no labour left. In the end he did not even leave his home ; but he had to work hard for the farmer, and would not have been able to mind the four hundred. His last job for us before he became a pressed man was to carry all the commando in sacks, about twenty at a time, from the field by his house to our lawn ; also about a hundred laying-hens and some old cocks. I shall never forget that first night. The poor, perplexed little birds, all mixed anyhow as they came out of the sacks, refused to go to bed in their nice houses. Only one had actually died of excitement, but several more seemed a bit shaky. We tried to drive them in, but they came out as fast as they went in. The Brown Leghorn cockerels, always possessed by Shaitan, tried to roost on the roof-tops ; the Buffs crept miserably under the floor-boards ; the Rhode Islanders stuck their silly necks through the wire-netting and tried to strangle themselves ; only the old hens behaved at all properly. In the end we had to catch most of the little fiends and thrust them into their houses through doors held gingerly ajar. It was eleven o'clock before we had finished.

'Will this go on every night ?' I asked Mary.

Her answer was not reassuring. 'Don't come out to-morrow night if it's too much for you. I'll get Wall and Isaacson to help.'

However, next night they went to bed in better order, and very soon gave no trouble in this way—the Brown Leghorn cockerels

always excepted. These creatures always did everything they could to annoy. Sometimes they flew out of their own runs into those of other people, whom they pursued with horrid screams and threats of what they would do when they caught them. No other cockerel of the same age could stand up to these little spitfires. Sometimes half a dozen of them would fly into the boughs of a cedar tree near their run, despite nine feet of wire-netting; and when caught with enormous difficulty, would attack their captors tooth and nail. Our schoolboys in their holidays used gleefully to make an excursion every evening, after dinner, armed with ladders and long sticks 'to put the Pangoflins to bed.' Why Pangoflins I don't know for certain, but think it was from an article in *Punch* which talked of 'Pangoflins, Porbeagles, and other laying strains.' Certainly the word well describes their flipperly-gibberly goblin-like nature. Their cousins, the Exchequer Leghorns, grey and white things, had quite different characters, being timid and fearful and quite unenterprising. The Chequered pullets developed an extraordinary chuckle, rather like a peacock's screech, when they were four or five months old. When quite small, they were exactly like a water-wagtail to look at, and this resemblance nearly led an old and respectable cat called Tom Puss, belonging to my small daughter Patience, into grievous error. He was huffed and uneasy when the colony on the lawn was first planted, but soon came to tolerate the chickens; nor did they take much notice of him. One day, however, he was observed stalking a small party of Exchequers, which were flittering about the ground just like wagtails. He almost made his spring, suddenly recognised the birdlets for what they were; stopped, as it were, suspended in mid-air, and then turned his back on them and stalked away with an air of injured dignity and conscious virtue.

The laying-hens used to lay incredible quantities of eggs after their migration; many more than when George tended them. Another curious thing was that under George they always laid their eggs exactly in dozens. Now George is honest as the day, yet both these things happened. I think for one reason they were better fed and more carefully flinted, shelled, and watered near the house than down at the keeper's; and if George had a few eggs more or less than the last dozen, they were kept till he brought the next lot up to the house, perhaps three days later.

We sold eggs weekly to an old man who came round in a cart collecting them; and he would usually refuse to take them except

in exact dozens. 'Keep them four till I come next week, Mum,' he would say to Mary; and we would wonder what his 'fresh eggs' were really like if a week more or less made no difference.

Let none think that hen-tending is a soft job. For one thing, 400 chickens consume enormous quantities of water. It is almost one man's job (especially if he is full of microbes) to satisfy their raging thirst. They are so darned particular about it—won't drink water that has got too hot in the sun, or too foul (they foul it themselves, as a rule, just to make you get some more), or too cold, or too hard, or too soft. And if you fail to provide the laying-hens with water which is just to their taste, they promptly retaliate by laying no eggs.

It soon became apparent that the job she had taken on was going to be too much for Mary; Patience and her governess and I helped as best we were able, but were not skilled labourers. The governess (a foreign lady) was no good at all at handling birds. A fierce 'broody' once caught her a real good peck on the back of her knuckles, and destroyed her confidence for ever. After that she was only good for such menial tasks as cleaning out the runs and sweeping up feathers. Patience did her best, but *would* dally with her special favourites. There was one small and late family of Buffs, still with the hen that hatched them—a large, white, old barn-door fowl. Their real mother was a Buff hen who laid a very pink egg, and plenty of them, so all her eggs had been collected for hatching. Patience called her Pinky, and this family the Pinkaloos. They were a particularly engaging lot of youngsters and became very tame. If Patience was given a job of work to do, unless strictly supervised, she gravitated to the Pinkaloo coop and played with them instead of getting on with her job. A really tame, half-grown Buff that doesn't mind being stroked, and will let itself be caught, and will look in your pocket for crushed maize, is rather attractive. Most birds do so hate being handled.

My own particular friend was Buff Cocky. Mary said I wasted more time with him than Patience did with the Pinkaloos. He was large and golden and noble-looking; very haughty at first, but in the end almost embarrassingly friendly. His heart was won in the usual way—through another organ—with maize as a medium. He lived on an open range with eight or nine wives, down in the paddock below the lawn. As soon as he saw either one of us he came tearing up, his wives trailing behind him like a comet, begging for maize, which was generally forthcoming.

If he met with a rebuff, he would look aggrieved, collect his wives, and pretend to look for worms. Left to himself, he was a perfect gentleman. 'Look, girls, here is something to eat.' He always called his wives if he found a worm, although by the time they came the worm had usually vanished. He maintained a strict but kindly discipline, and would not allow any unseemly brawling in the family circle, though I am afraid he had his favourites. Anyway, he always roosted between the same two hens, and when one of them went broody, placed himself next the wall.

What a nuisance broodiness is. Yet things might be worse, for as Patience once remarked thoughtfully, when she saw me trying to remove two broody hens at once from the nest boxes—'It's lucky cows don't go broody, papa.' It is indeed.

But I am digressing. The point was that someone had to be found who would do most of the heavy work, especially before breakfast. Feeding the multitude at about 7.30 summer-time was all very well for a few days, but rapidly lost its charm.

The only man available was a Naval pensioner in bad health, invalided from the Service, who had been in the *Canopus* when she rounded the Horn after the gallant Cradock. 'Lucky for us we were too far off, we should only have gone to the bottom the same as the others did,' was his considered verdict on the part his ship might have played at Coronel. Later, in Stanley harbour, *Canopus* had fulfilled admirably her rôle of cheese in the mouse-trap. The mouse came along, saw the cheese (firm on the mud), came a little nearer to sniff at it; suddenly saw tripod masts over the low land, and realised that the cat was loose. Well, well, Von Spee put up a magnificent fight. It is a pity the Boches have no sense of chivalry, or even of decent ordinary fairplay, for they are brave men. For a small emolument, this Petty Officer agreed to come every morning, open the houses, feed the birds, and fill the water-dishes. He did all he could, but he hadn't got the right touch, somehow. Bird men, like horse men, or cow men, must be born, I think, and cannot be made. Perhaps there is something in the theory of Transmigration, and you cannot sympathise properly with a beast or a bird unless you have inhabited its mortal flesh during one of your past incarnations. This theory, too, would account for the horror some people have of certain animals. For instance, if you had been a bird that was killed by a cat. . . . ! Anyhow, P.O. Tappitoe had never been a bird, I am quite certain. Exactly what he did wrong, it is hard to say—it was just every-

thing—and the tragedy was that the dear good man thought he was doing magnificently. Mary spent most of the interval between breakfast and lunch in repairing his errors, and soon declared that he made her work harder than ever. So we went back to the old routine, till Corporal Smithson came along.

He was by way of being a veteran of Mons, and always displayed his medal on his waistcoat. I think he had been an orderly-room clerk, his manners were so good. Anyway, here he was, invalidated out with shell-shock, and longing to help look after the birds. To hear him, you would think he had never done anything else all his life but tend chickens. He was not exactly a flier, but an improvement on Tappitoe. Sometimes his nerves were all of a quiver, and then the chickens had no breakfast. The Army, it will generally be agreed, is a wonderful school for learning the theory and practice of 'keeping out of trouble.' Smithson always had some absolutely armour-proof excuse when anything was wrong; you could never, or hardly ever, catch him out, and he was always perfectly sure he was right. Irritating? Oh no, not if you smiled sweetly at him and remembered he was the only man within a twenty-mile radius who knew the head of a chicken from its tail. He was obviously fond of birds, and that counted for much in his favour; but he was not fond of the messy and uninteresting parts of his work—the perpetual and never-ending cleaning, disinfecting, and tidying up which is so all-essential if a lot of chickens are to be kept fit and well in a comparatively small space.

One of our chief troubles as the summer grew old was the problem of the young cockerels. We couldn't fatten them—it certainly would not have paid to do so, even if we had been able to buy the wherewithal. Neither barley-meal nor maize could be bought with any regularity, and you can't grow table birds on damaged oats. A very few were sold as stock birds, but there was not much demand, and not a tithe of them were accounted for in this way. They made a poor price in the market, as they were not fat—merely healthy. All we could do was to eat them ourselves, and this method was not very satisfactory. You don't like eating an engaging little creature whom you have known for weeks as Tootums; who has become tame enough to peck at your boots and eat out of your hand. However, eaten they had to be, and there was an end of it. A strict rule had to be made against such questions as 'Who is this?', when the cover was lifted off

the dish, for neither Mary nor Patience would touch a morsel of 'Tootums' or 'the youngest Pinkaloo' if they knew his identity. The Pangoflins we all ate with less sentiment, as we disliked their characters; but even the Pangoflins sometimes seemed to inspire affection. One of the boys remarked one day, when the bread sauce was being handed round, 'I caught this one in the cedar tree two nights ago—he's got a lump on his leg—look!' That kind of thing was too much for some of the party, and Mary would say 'There's some cold ham on the sideboard if anyone prefers it,' and Jim would get a wiggling, later on.

George would sometimes wander round, on a Sunday afternoon, rather impressed with the appearance of the poultry. I know he thought originally that we should lose the lot, after he handed them over. Mary generally used to get him to perform the surgical operations—not that many were necessary. Once, however, in George's absence, she and I opened a hen's crop with a pen-knife, as the bird was crop-bound and slowly dying. It was a messy and disgusting business, but saved the hen's life. The silly thing had swallowed about a yard of grass-rope, and had then gone on feeding till its crop was nearly bursting. The wiry grass stopped anything getting out of the crop, of course. The hole we made, Mary stitched up neatly, and the hen laid an egg a week later.

Soon after the Armistice we decided that we were living beyond our means, and must move into a smaller house. My war gains were all in microbes, not in dollars or pounds, and it became increasingly obvious that a house and establishment which had cost x pounds before the war would cost $2x$ pounds in 1919. As our income was only represented by the original x , now $x-6s.$ per pound, something had to be done to obtain an equation. I often wish I had stayed at home during the war, and made a corner in something which everybody wanted. It would have been dead easy, as almost everything was badly wanted at one time or another between 1914 and 1918, and as far as I can make out, nearly everyone who stayed at home made a pot of money, unless he were deaf, dumb, and imbecile.

We were lucky enough to find a nice plump profiteer, who gave the price asked without a blink—I have thought ever since that I was foolish not to have asked half as much again, but it's no good 'jobbing backwards.' So early in the spring of last year the chickens and ourselves were homeless—metaphorically speaking.

The fame of the fowls, and the unfailing regularity with which the hens and pullets laid their eggs, had been bruited about by Smithson ; and rather to our surprise, when it was known we were leaving, we had quantities of good offers for our stock. We did sell some, but Mary's sisters said they would keep our best pullets and a cock or two until we could find another home. We sold all the material, wire-netting, coops, houses, and so forth, for what seemed a lot of money—it takes a long time to realise that £1 is really only 10s. Smithson almost wept when we departed, and has since started a chicken farm of his own—with what success I know not.

One Smithson incident will always remain in my memory. He saw a young sparrow-hawk going for a half-grown pullet one morning—we were bothered by hawks a good deal—and threw a spade at the struggling pair. The spade killed the sparrow-hawk and did not hurt the chicken. He told us what he had done, as if it was all in the day's work and not at all remarkable, and there was the spade and there was the dead hawk, so I have no reason to doubt his tale. But I think he must be the only man in England who has killed a sparrow-hawk with a spade.

Last spring we once more found ourselves in a country house of our own, and began to talk chicken again. Larch disease, fortunately for us, is very prevalent in this part of England, and I have been able to get quantities of young diseased larches, which make capital poles. Wire-netting—bad—was to be had at a price—big. I wrote and told the manufacturers what I thought of them, but they only put their fingers to their nose.

We have been extravagant over our fowl-houses this time. Mary does wonderful sums to prove that we are entitled to spend so much, and says it is all the money we made in 1918 from the sale of our old plant. Anyhow, we now have houses with several commodious compartments and a verandah ; if only hot and cold water were laid on we could let them as summer bungalows. I have put up all the wire and all the posts and gates myself, which shows I am getting better, thank you. Mary's sisters had taken the utmost care of our selected stock, and it really was nice to see them again,—the pullets, I mean, though Mary's sisters are quite nice, too.

We have a village lad now, one John, who helps in the garden when he has 'done' the chickens. As of old, Mary does most of the tending. John has a sweet smile, but not an overpowering

desire for work. He will always slope off at a quarter to five if he can (five is his time) and tell you gently in the morning that he didn't know the time. He is not really to be trusted to feed the fowls. In any pen of birds, young or old, there are always some which get squashed and bullied by the rest, and if you just dump the food down before the hungry crowd these weaklings will get little or nothing. You must see that all get a proper share. John never does. The worst of it is, John's mother, a farm labourer's wife, keeps chickens, so her son thinks he knows all about the trade, and if you objurgate him you will be told that that is the way mother does it. Still, he is an attractive urchin, and I have known worse boys. I do not honestly think any boy can be trusted entirely with animals. They—boys—are casual, irresponsible creatures till they are seventeen or eighteen, and sometimes longer.

I wonder occasionally, and have even asked Mary, why we choose to bother ourselves with the care of seventy or eighty laying-hens, and a whole crowd of pullets and cockerels. She says that you can't get eggs now if you don't keep chickens, and there is something in that. But if that were the only reason I don't think it would be cogent enough. It seems to me that the real reason we give ourselves so much trouble is that we are interested in them, and look on them in some sort as friends. They all have different characters—astonishingly different, when you get to know them, and their idiosyncrasies are most entertaining. The whole business of chicken-farming, in spite of the labour, is interesting, for it demands much skill and knowledge to make it successful, and a good deal of resource at times. For instance, this spring several chicks took sick and died when they were about a fortnight old. Local opinion was to the effect that such visitations were an Act of God, and that once they began to die we might expect to lose the whole lot. This was not very satisfying, so we post-mortemed two or three of them and found certain symptoms. Reference to the latest book (a lot of good chicken literature is available) established the fact that the trouble was Coccidiosis—a fell disease for very young birds. Appropriate remedies were applied, and we lost only eight or nine. It made one wonder if the appalling mortality which sometimes used to take place among hand-reared pheasants could not have been lessened a good deal. I am inclined to think that few keepers are really resourceful; but, anyhow, tame pheasants are things

of the past for most of us, and few will be found to regret them.

If I may sum up my ideas on the subject, I should say that chicken farming has been and is a very real diversion and pleasure for Mary and Patience and me. In 1918 it was a great blessing for a broken man to have some little job he could do, which helped to take his thoughts away from the horrors of the past and the anxieties of the present ; and in any family it is a good thing when there is some common interest or hobby at which its members can work together, and talk over of an evening. How many marriages go wrong just because the contracting parties have nothing to talk about, in which they are both interested. Cupid, looked at from this angle, ought always to be followed by a tame fowl !

So bless all fowls and chickens,
They've such a way about 'em,
You wonder how the Dickens
You e'er got on without 'em.

THE ELIXIR OF YOUTH.

SINCE the earth began its twisting, or since very soon after it began, there have been persons on it who perceived more or less early in life that it was seldom possible to get something in return for quite nothing, and that even if you did the delicate situation then arising was attended often with at least as much personal danger as delight, and generally with much more. Tom Toole knew all about it, so he was not going to sell his own little white soul to the devil, though he was sixty years of age and his soul, he expected, was shrivelled a bit now like a dried fig. He had no faith in Wishing Hats, or Magic Carpets, or Herbs of Longevity, and he had not heard of the Philosopher's Stone, but he had a belief in an Elixir, somewhere in the world, that would make you young again. He had heard, too, of the Transmutation of Metals; indeed, he had associated himself a great many years ago with a Belfast brass-founder in the production of certain sovereigns. The brassfounder perished under the rigours of his subsequent incarceration in gaol, but Tom Toole had been not at all uncomfortable in the lunatic asylum to which a compassionate retribution had assigned him. It was in the asylum that he met the man from Kilsheelan who, if you could believe him, really had got a 'touch' from the fairies and could turn things he had no wish for into the things he would be wanting. The man from Kilsheelan first discovered his gift, so he told Tom Toole, when he caught a turtle-dove one day and changed it into a sheep. Then he turned the sheep into a latherpot, just to make sure, and it *was* sure. So he thought he would like to go to the land of the Ever Young which is in the western country, but he did not know how he could get there unless he went in a balloon. Sure, he sat down in his cabin and turned the shaving-pot into a fine balloon, but the balloon was so large it burst down his house and he was brought to the asylum. Well, that was clear enough to Tom Toole, and after he had got good advice from the man from Kilsheelan it came into his mind one day to slip out of the big gates of the asylum, and, believe me, since then he had walked the roads of Munster singing his ballads and searching for something which was difficult to find, and that was his youth. For Tom Toole was growing old, a little old creature he was growing, gay enough and a bit of a philanderer still, but age is certain and puts the black teeth in your mouth and the whiteness of water on your hair.

One time he met a strange little old quick-talking man who came to him ; he seemed just to bob up in front of him from the road itself.

'Ah, good day t'ye, and phwat part are ye fram ?'

'I'm from beyant,' said Tom Toole, nodding back to the Knock-mealdown Mountains where the good monks had lodged him for a night.

'Ah, God deliver ye, and indeed I don't want to know your business at all but—but—where are ye going ?'

Between his words he kept spitting, in six or seven little words there would be at least one spit. There was yellow dust in the flaps of his ears and neat bushes of hair in the holes. Cranks and wrinkles covered his nose, and the skull of him was bare, but there was a good tuft on his chin. Tom Toole looked at him straight and queer, for he did not admire the fierce expression of him, and there were smells of brimstone on him like a farmer who had been dipping his ewes, and he almost expected to see a couple of horns growing out of his brow.

'It's not meself does be knowing at all, good little man,' said Tom Toole to him, 'and I might go to the fair of Cappoquin, or I might walk on to Dungarvan, in the harbour now, to see will I buy a couple of lobsters for me nice supper.'

And he turned away to go off upon his road, but the little old man followed and kept by his side, telling him of a misfortune he had endured ; a chaise of his, a little pony chaise, had been almost destroyed, but the ruin was not so great, for a kind lady of his acquaintance, a lady of his own denomination, had given him four pounds, one shilling and ninepence. 'Ah, not that I'm needing your money, ma'am,' says I, 'but damage is damage,' I says, 'and it's not right,' I says, 'that I should be at the harm of your coachman'; and there he was spitting and going on like a clock spilling over its machinery when he unexpectedly grasped Tom Toole by the hand, wished him Good day and Good luck, and that he might meet him again——

Tom Toole walked on for an hour and came to a cross roads, and there was the same old man sitting in a neat little pony chaise smoking his pipe.

'Where are ye going ?' says he.

'Dungarvan,' said Tom Toole.

'Jump in then,' said the little old man, and they jogged along the road conversing together ; he was as sharp as an old goat.

'What is your aspiration?' he said, and Tom Toole told him.

'That's a good aspiration, indeed. I know what you're seeking, Tom Toole; let's get on now and there'll be tidings in it.'

When Tom Toole and the little old man entered the public at Dungarvan they met a gang of strong young fellows, mechanics and people to drive the traction engines, for there was a circus in the town. Getting their fill of porter, they were, and nice little white loaves; very decent boys, but one of them a Scotchman with a large unrejoicing face, and he had a hooky nose with tussocks of hair in the nostrils and the two tails of hair to his moustache like an old Chinese man. Peter Mullane was telling a tale, and there was a sad bit of a man from Bristol with a sickness in his breast and a cough that would heave out the side of a mountain. Peter Mullane waited while Tom Toole and his friend sat down and then he proceeded with his tale.

'Away with ye! said the devil to Neal Carlin, and away he was gone to the four corners of the world. And when he came to the first corner he saw a place where the rivers do be rushing——'

'——the only dam thing that does rush then in this country,' interrupted the Scotchman with a sneer.

'Shut your——' began the man from Bristol, but he was taken with the cough, until his cheeks were scarlet and his eyes, fixed angrily upon the Highland man, were strained to tear-drops. 'Shut your——' he began it again, but he was rent by a large and vexing spasm that rocked him, while his friends looked at him and wondered would he be long for this world. He recovered quite suddenly and exclaimed '——dam face' to that Highland man. And then Peter Mullane went on:

'I am not given to thinking,' said he, 'that the Lord would put a country the like of Ireland in a wee corner of the world, and he wanting the nook of it for thistles and the poor savages that devour them. Well, Neal Carlin came to a place where the rivers do be rushing——' he paused invitingly, 'and he saw a little fairy creature with fine tresses of hair sitting under a rowan tree.'

'A rowan?' exclaimed the Highland man.

Peter nodded.

'A Scottish tree!' declared the other.

'Oh, shut your——' began the little coughing man, but again his conversation was broken, and by the time he had recovered from his spasms the company was mute.

'If,' said Peter Mullane, 'you'd wish to observe the rowan in its pride and beauty just clap your eye upon it in the Galtee

Mountains. How would it thrive, I ask you, in a place which was stiff with granite and sloppy with haggis? And what would ye do, my clever man, what would ye do, if ye met a sweet fairy woman——?’

‘I’d kiss the Judy,’ said the Highland man, spitting a great splash.

Peter Mullane gazed at him for a minute or two as if he did not love him very much, but then he continued:

‘Neal Carlin was attracted by her, she was a sweet creature. “Warm!” says she to him with a friendly tone. “Begod, ma’am, it is a hot day,” he said, and thinks he, she is a likely person to give me my aspiration. And sure enough when he sat down beside her she asked him, “What is your aspiration, Neal Carlin?” and he said “Saving your grace, ma’am, it is but to enjoy the world and to be easy in it.” “That is a good aspiration,” she said, and she gave him some secret advice. He went home to his farm, Neal Carlin did, and he followed the advice, and in a month or two he had grown very wealthy and things were easy with him. But still he was not satisfied, he had a greedy mind, and his farm looked a drift little place that was holding him down from big things. So he was not satisfied though things were easy with him, and one night before he went sleeping he made up his mind, “It’s too small it is. I’ll go away from it now, and a farm twice as big I will have, three times as big, yes, I will have it ten times as big.” He went sleeping on the wildness of his avarice, and when he rolled off the settle in the morning and stood up to stretch his limbs he hit his head a wallop against the rafter. He cursed it and had a kind of thought that the place had got smaller. As he went from the door he struck his brow against the lintel hard enough to beat down the house. “What is come to me?” he roared in his pains; and looking into his field there were his five cows and his bullock no bigger than sheep—will ye believe that, then—and his score of ewes no bigger than rabbits, mind it now, and it was not all, for the very jackdaws were no bigger than chafers, and the neat little wood was no more account than a grove of raspberry bushes. Away he goes to the surgeon’s to have drops put in his eyes, for he feared the blindness was coming on him, but on his return there was his bullock no bigger than an old boot, and his cabin had wasted to the size of a bird-cage.’

Peter leaned forward, for the boys were quiet, and consumed a deal of porter. And the Highland man asked him, ‘Well, what happened?’

'Oh, he just went up to his cabin and kicked it over the hedge as you might an old can, and then he strolled off to another corner of the world, Neal Carlin did, whistling "The Lanty Girl."'

Tom Toole's friend spoke to Peter Mullane. 'Did ye say it was in the Galtee Mountains that the young fellow met the lady?'

'In the Galtee Mountains,' said Peter.

'To the Galtee Mountains let us be going, Tom Toole,' cried the little old man. 'Come on now, there'll be tidings in it!'

So off they drove, and when they had driven a day and slept a couple of nights they were there, and they came to a place where the rivers do be rushing, and there was a rowan tree but no lady in it.

'What will we do now, Tom Toole?' says the old man.

'We'll not stint it,' says he, and they searched by night and by day looking for a person who would give them their youth again. They sold the chaise for some guineas and the pony for a few more, and they were walking among the hills for a thousand days but never a dust of fortune did they discover. Whenever they asked a person to guide them they would be swearing at them or they would jeer.

'Well, may a good saint stretch your silly old skins for ye!' said one.

'Thinking of your graves and travelling to the priest ye should be!' said one.

'The nails of your boots will be rusty and rotten searching for the like of that,' said one.

'It's two quarts of black milk from a Kerry cow ye want,' said one; 'take a sup of that and you'll be young again!'

'Of black milk!' said Tom Toole's friend, 'where would we get that?'

The person said he would get a pull of it in the Comeragh Mountains, fifty miles away.

'Tom Toole,' said the little old man, 'it's what I'll do. I'll walk on to the Comeragh Mountains to see what I will see, and do you go on searching here, for to find that young girl would be better than forty guineas worth of blather. And when I find the cow I'll take my fill of a cup and bring you to it.'

So they agreed upon it and the old man went away saying 'I'll be a score of days, no more. Good day, Tom Toole, good day!' much as an old crow might shout it to a sweep.

When he was gone Tom Toole journeyed about the world, and the day after he went walking to a fair. Along the road the little

ass carts were dribbling into town from Fews and Carrigleena, when he saw a young girl in a field trying to secure an ass.

'Oi——, Oi—— !' the girl was calling out to him, and he went in the field and helped her with the ass, which was a devil to capture and it not wanting. She thanked him ; she was a sweet slip of a colleen with a long fall of hair that the wind was easy with.

'Tis warm !' she said to Tom Toole. 'Begod, ma'am,' says he to her quickly, taking his cue, 'it is a hot day.'

'Where are ye going, Tom Toole ?' she asked him, and he said :

'I am seeking a little contrivance, ma'am, that will let me enjoy the world and live easy in it. That is my aspiration.'

'I'll give you what you are seeking,' and she gave him a wee bottle with red juices in it.

'Indeed, ma'am, I'm obliged to ye,' and he took her by the hand and wished her Good day and Good luck, and that he might meet her again.

When he got the elixir of youth he gave over his searching. He hid the bottle in his breast and went up into the mountains as high as he could go to bide the coming of the little old man. It is a queer thing, but Tom Toole had never heard the name of him—it would be some place in the foreign corners of the world like Portugal that he had come from, no doubt. Up he went ; first there was rough pasture for bullocks, then fern and burnt furze, and then little but heather, and great rocks strewn about like shells, and sour brown streams coming from the bog. He wandered about for twenty days and the old man did not return, and for forty days he was still alone.

'The divil receive him, but I'll die against his return !' And Tom Toole pulled the wee bottle from his breast. He was often minded to lift the cork and take a sup of the elixir of youth. 'But,' says he, 'it would be an unfriendly deed. Sure if I got me youth sudden I'd be off to the wonders of the land and leave that old fool roaming till the Day of Judgment.' And he would put the bottle away and wait for scores of days until he was sick and sorry with grieving. A thousand days he was on his lonely wanderings, soft days as mellow as cream, and hard days when it is ribs of iron itself you would want to stiffen you against the crack of the blast. His skimpy hair grew down to the lappet of his coat, very ugly he was, but the little stranger sheep of the mountain were not daunted when he moved by, and even the flibeens had the soft call for him. A thousand days was in it, and then he said :

'Good evening to my good luck. I've had my enough of this. Sure I'll despise myself for ever more if I wait the tide of another drifting day. It's to-night I'll sleep in a neat bed with a quilt of down over me heart, for I'm going to be young again.'

He crept down the mountain to a neat little town and went in a room in the public to have a cup of porter. A little forlorn old man also came in from the road and sat down beside, and when they looked at each other they each let out a groan. 'Glory be!' says he. 'Glory be!' cried Tom Toole, 'it's the good little man in the heel of it. Where are ye from?'

'From the mountains.'

'And what fortune is in it, did ye find the farm?'

'Divil a clod.'

'Nor the Kerry cow?'

'Divil a horn.'

'Nor the good milk?'

'Divil a quart, and I that dry I could be drunk with the smell of it. Tom Toole, I have traipsed the high and the deep of this realm and believe you me, it is not in it; the long and the wide of this realm—not in it.' He kept muttering sadly, 'not in it.'

'Me good little man,' cried Tom Toole, 'don't be havering like an old goat. Here it is! the fortune of the world!'

He took the wee bottle from his breast and shook it before his eyes. 'The drops that 'ull give ye your youth as easy as shifting a shirt. Come, now, I've waited the long days to share wid ye, for I couldn't bring myself to desert a comrade who was ranging the wild regions for the likes of me. Many's the time I've lifted that cork, and thinks I: He's gone, and soon I'll be going, so here goes. Divil a go was in it. I could not do it, not for silver and not for gold, and not for all the mad raging mackerel that sleep in the sea.'

The little old stranger took the wee bottle in his two hands. He was but a quavering stick of a man now; half dead he was, and his name it is Martin O'Moore.

'Is it the rale stuff, Tom Toole?'

'From herself I got it,' he said, and he let on to him about that sweet-spoken young girl.

'Did she give you the directions on the head of it?'

'What directions is it?'

'The many drops is a man to drink?'

'No, but a good sup of it will do the little job.'

'A good sup of it, Tom Toole, a good sup of it, ay?' says he, unsqueezing the cork. 'The elixir of youth, a good sup of it, says you, a good sup of it, a great good good sup of it!'

And sticking it into his mouth he drained the wee bottle of its every red drop. He stood there looking like a man in a fit, holding the empty bottle in his hand until Tom Toole took it from him with reproaches in his poor old eyes. But in a moment it was his very eyes he thought were deceiving him; not an inch of his skin but had the dew of fear on it, for the little old man began to change his appearance quick like the sand running through a glass, or as fast as the country changes down under a flying swan.

'Mother o' God!' screamed Martin O'Moore, 'it's too fast backward I'm growing, dizzy I am.'

And indeed his bald head suddenly got the fine black hair grown upon it, the whiskers flew away from him and his face was young. He began to wear a strange old suit that suddenly got new, and he had grown down through a handsome pair of trousers and into the little knickerbockers of a boy before you could count a score. And he had a bit of a cold just then, though he was out of it in a twink, and he let a sneeze that burst a button off his breeches, a little tin button, which was all that ever was found of him. Smaller and smaller he fell away, like the dust in an hour-glass, till he was no bigger than an acorn, and then devil a bit of him was left there at all.

Tom Toole was frightened at the quiet and the emptiness and he made to go away, but he turned in the doorway and stretching out his arms to the empty room he whispered 'The greed, the avarice, may hell pour all its buckets on your bad little heart! May——' But just then he caught sight of the cup of porter that Martin O'Moore had forgotten to drink, so he went back to drink his enough and then went out into the great roaring world where he walked from here to there until one day he came right back to his old asylum. He had been away for twenty years, he was an old man, very old indeed. And there was the man from Kilsheelan digging potatoes just inside the gates of the sunny garden.

'Tis warm!' said the traveller staring at him through the railings, but the man from Kilsheelan only said 'Come in, Tom Toole, is it staying or going ye are?'

A. E. COPPARD.

THE POETRY OF CHARLES PÉGUY.¹

THE art of reading, according to Charles Péguy, is an act of deliberate collaboration between the reader and the matter read. The author—it is his risk—gives up his inmost thought: 'il se l'arrache du ventre'; the reader—it is his disconcerting responsibility—has to enter not merely into a *book* but into a *life* 'with faithfulness and sympathy and a certain indispensable acquiescence.'

The question arises: Is it the more courteous and profitable course for the reader to accept what the author has distilled and approved and to work simply on that, or is he justified in seeking intimacy with his author through the record of his life and the memories of his friends?

The Book of Job, it may be safely asserted, gains in impressiveness and human appeal from its anonymity; Homer is best enjoyed apart from the Homeric question. But with contemporary poets and prophets the temptation to seek their personal intimacy is not to be withstood, least of all with a genius as fervent and lovable, as perverse and inspired as Charles Péguy.

He does not give for our wonder and delight works planned and pruned and perfected by sensitive self-criticism. Far from this. His poems and essays are more like the large discourse of a Master among his disciples, slow-moving, lingering round images and similitudes; full of repetitions and returns; often startling in beauty and insight; poignant in tenderness, but (apparently) owning no law but immediate personal promptings.

A further reason for approaching the poetry through the man is the fact that the chief authority for the life of Charles Péguy is Daniel Halévy: Daniel Halévy with his uncanny power of entering into the life of other men; Daniel Halévy with whom Péguy shared so many experiences—the first ardour of the Dreyfus struggle; the strenuous exhilarating work on the *Cahiers de la Quinzaine*; the long walks in sun and shower, conveying, reconveying one another home on broad roads threading the rich plain

¹ The material for this article is drawn from the five volumes already published of Péguy's collected works. The ten volumes which are to follow would probably modify some of the statements made.

of Ile de France, now in eager discourse, more often in silence 'dans un paysage qui sait aussi se taire'; the midnight patrolling of Paris streets, 'bras dessus, bras dessous,' reciting Hugo's verse to each other—'You knew more history and I more verse,' writes Péguy.

Though born in 1873, the second year of the Republic, his schooldays falling in the first zealous times of secularised education, and thus a modern of the moderns, Péguy nevertheless represents—and loves to represent—'la vieille France,' 'la France éternelle,' the France of the Sieur de Joinville, of Jeanne d'Arc, of Jean François Millet, the France that has always been there, a steadfast background to the shifting régimes of Courts and Revolutions, of Catholicism and Encyclopedism. Péguy's birthplace, Orleans, was at the heart of this historic France. He may be said to have been, from his birth, dedicated to the service of the Maid.

Like her and like Millet, he came of peasant stock: woodmen from the forests round Orleans, vine dressers from the banks of the Loire. It was in no peasant's cottage that he was born, but in a suburb of the working people. His father died while he was an infant. The mother laboured to support the household, and it was from the grandmother, a fine old peasant ignorant of reading and writing, that Péguy learnt his first lessons, the satisfaction of a job well done—the polishing furniture with an old stocking—and the mastery of a pure vigorous French 'as spoken on the banks of the Loire.' From her old tales he may have caught the trick of rhythmical repetitions like the recurrences in fairy-tales or the clauses of a litany.

Moreover he learned a secret few men know: the secret of the sorrows and cares, the inevitable narrowness of the lot of working women—and they are the vast majority—under all dispensations. His last poem, 'Eve,' centres in the early stages—for in its vast course it circulates round almost everything human and divine—round the lot of the eternal House-mother. It is she who bears children and, helpless, sees them swept off on some frail raft into the ocean of life; who spends laborious days saving and planning, yet is never free from anxiety:

'Tout vous demeure égal sous une égale peur,
Éternelle économe, éternelle ouvrière';

who wakes and watches, piles up linen on her shelves, and unfolds winding sheets—

'Vous avez tant baisé jusque dans leurs tombeaux
Les fils de votre amour et de votre misère';

the servant of all, yet lonely for all her love and labour :

'Et nul ne vous connaît, seule laborieuse,
Ni l'homme votre fils, ni l'homme votre frère,
Ni l'homme votre époux, ni l'homme votre père.'

Yet all men, and Péguy most of all, are tender over this 'aïeule
aux maigres doigts':

'Et je vous aime tant, ô la plus sérieuse,
Et la plus prosternée aux genoux de travail.'

The marvel of this understanding is Péguy's meditation on the anguish of Mary during the Passion. Elsewhere she is, to him, Notre-Dame, the tender symbol of the Divine Pity. Here she is an agonised old woman following, following, weeping, weeping, till the poor face is so marred that the very boys in the street turn away their eyes.

'Pour ne pas rire,
Pour ne pas lui rire au nez
Et—on ne sait pas—peut-être aussi pour ne pas pleurer.'

The strange respectful sympathy of the crowd for the mother makes the more disquieting the ferocity with which the common people—his own fellows—pursue the Son. Subtly, tenderly, Péguy follows the working of her mind. Now she is back in the old untroubled days :

'Et ensemble ils faisaient si bon ménage
La mère et le garçon.

Un bon fils pour son père Joseph,
Le vieux charpentier,
Le Maître charpentier.'

Then, womanlike, she wonders where she has been wrong. Was she too happy in the old days? Were she and Joseph too proud of the wonderful Child in the Temple?

Then the present rolls round her again with its noise and dust and cruel cries, and she asks affrightedly :

'Qu'est-ce qu'il avait donc fait à tout ce monde ?'

'Je vais vous le dire
Il avait sauvé le monde.'

Péguy, son of a poor mother, foresees what her life must be afterwards. Her eyes are so strained with weeping, never again shall she see clearly.

'Et pourtant après il faudrait travailler pour gagner sa vie,
Sa pauvre vie.'

'Ma mère,' 'Notre Dame,' 'La France'—to Péguy as to many other religious Frenchmen these make a mystical Trinity, three entities but one worship.

The Hearth was the first laid stone of Péguy's Temple.

Madame Péguy mère made her poor livelihood repairing straw-seated chairs and hiring them out in the Cathedral. In this way were laid two more corner-stones, the Altar and the Workshop. Péguy with other little boys played in the Porch of the Cathedral. Once a week he went to the Vicaire and received in docile fashion instruction which his secular teachers sedulously contradicted on the other six days. Always prone to extreme statement Péguy in his early manhood could say—and believed that he spoke the truth—'Eleven years of instruction—and indeed of education in the Catholic Faith, sincerely accepted at the time, have left no trace on me.'

Essential Christianity at all times held the strong hand of her purity on his heart and conscience; the Cathedral and all it stands for of beauty and tradition haunted his imagination. The Altar could wait.

His quarrel with the Church in his ardent Socialist days—and indeed always—was that she had lost touch with the Workshop—she that was born in a carpenter's shed. Her danger lies, in his view, not in the assaults of Science. Her deadly malady is the lack of Charity, the Charity that with St. Louis washed the feet of lepers and on the lips of Bossuet proclaimed the 'pre-eminent dignity of the Poor.'

Nor shall she open the door of the Workshop for herself nor the hearts of the people till she, she too, with the rest of the world consents to pay the price, the price of revolution, economic, industrial, social—in a word 'the revolution of temporal things for the sake of eternal salvation.'

Work, perfection of work, pride in work, was the foundation of Péguy's social creed. He glories in the love of work in the French people. 'Peuple laborieux, Peuple de plus profond labour,' 'Peuple inventeur de la Cathédrale.' He claimed that his mother mending her chairs worked in the spirit of the Cathedral-builders. Above all words he honoured the word 'craft,' refusing to apply it to the state-craft of politicians. When he enumerated the Trades represented at the Festival of the Republic, their names fall like gold beads of a rosary from the fingers of the devout. His first acquaintance with a craft was in the workshop of a carpenter with its good smell of fresh wood, its fascinating variety of tools. In his own craft of printer and publisher, Péguy was to delight in the beauty of his types—and to make rash experiments and lose money in consequence.

In this workshop he laid the fourth corner-stone of his Temple, the Army, the body of citizens trained and ready for the defence of their country, for the master carpenter had fought under Chanzy in the army of the Loire, upholding the honour of France in the disaster of 1870. These tragic battlefields lie round Orleans; bitter memories were on the lips of those veterans. 'Le Diable c'est les Prussiens.' All his life the inevitable approach of war was at the back of Péguy's consciousness.

We have to approach the French attitude towards war with respect and a large allowance. To them invasion has been a recurrent dread. Ste. Geneviève and the Huns, Jeanne driving back the English invader, the raw soldiers of the Revolution at Valmy, these moments were never out of Péguy's memory. There are other elements at once more primitive and more spiritual in a Frenchman's love of military glory. 'Peuple inventeur de la Croisade.' Péguy exults as he exulted over the invention of the Cathedral. He explains the Wars of the Revolution as 'springing from a deeply felt need of War, of Glory, of the urgent instinct to make history which at given moments seizes a whole people.' We English have not felt this need since Elizabethan times. Pre-occupation with other practical obligations, especially a long responsibility for subject races, has, in us, blunted the gallant passion. But it is otherwise with the French. Saints like Louis and Jeanne have it as much as noble gentlemen like Bayard and Turenne. It was a passion with republican Péguy.

He exulted in the campaigns in Mauretania, seeing in the French officers—his friends Halévy and Ernest Psichari were

amongst them—true successors of Roman proconsuls, like them enforcing order, founding cities, building roads in deserts of North Africa. When these young artillery-men were stationed in Paris he gloried, coming from his early train, to meet the procession of their guns, the beloved 'soixante-quinze,' 'our mathematical, our perfect guns, slender with the fine slenderness of all young things.'

When war came at last it brought a sudden unfamiliar peace to his soul. 'These days,' he writes, 'are worth thirty years of life.'

The Hearth, the Altar, the Workshop, the Army, a man's house of life might stand four-square on these, but Péguy's building was bound to be a Cathedral with two flanking towers.

From his peasant ancestry Péguy drew a deeply rooted passion for the fertile earth. Orleans lies on the edge of the rich Beauce plain which spreads, miles and miles of cornland, northward towards Chartres.

'Deux mille ans de labeur ont fait de cette terre
Un réservoir sans fin pour les âges nouveaux.'

We know the life on these plains. Millet has shown it to us; gleaners bending wearied backs under the August sun, uncouth spadesmen raising clods in a dull rhythm, the pause at sunset, the sound of bells across the plain.

Péguy knew the life of men who toil in the sun and the rain—in the rain as much as in the sun, for the war has shown us that the climate of France is not wholly unlike our own. He knew how prolonged rain may spoil the harvest and threaten the vines. He knew also that nothing daunts the hopefulness of the peasant. He—the peasant—proves to you that there will be no grapes this year and straightway invites you to the vintaging. The fields are sodden—well! next year is going to be an exceptional season.

For this wholesome habit of hopefulness Péguy has an apt similitude.

'They accept'—he says—'good and ill fortune as the good soil of Lorraine—a soil wholesome and generous, just, "in good heart," mellow—drinks all the rain that falls yet never suffers it to stagnate in bogs and marshes, but distils it at once into living waters, clear and sweet, that rise in springs and water the meadows by the Meuse.'

So from all evil days 'this singular people, these Frenchmen,'

distil the living stream of Hope, and God Himself looks down and wonders at them :

‘ Et ça me confonde
Et ça me passe
Et il faut que ma Grâce soit tellement grande.’

The similitudes of Péguy have this in common with the Parables of the New Testament, that in neither do we lose the fresh loveliness of the image in the depth of the thing signified. The Good Shepherd remains a real shepherd such as we have known in storm and shine on these hills, the ‘ Father who had two sons ’ remains a human Father—incidentally dearer to Péguy’s heart than any of the saints, except Jeanne of course. In Péguy’s similitudes—‘ il faut le dire ’ (a favourite expression of his)—the image is so dear that he cannot always subordinate it to the thing signified.

‘ But here, says God, in this kindly land of France,
In this wholesome land of Lorraine,
They are good gardeners.
They water gardens of the soul
With floods that would elsewhere stagnate and turn sour.’

‘ Jardins mystérieux, jardins merveilleux,
Jardins bien douloureux des âmes françaises.’

(And you think of the ladies of Port Royal and of Eugénie de Guérin.)

But he cannot keep his mind off actual gardens :

‘ Bons jardins de curé
Bien requiet, bien requois.

Bons jardins de Presbytère
Avec ses tournesols.’

and the actual skill of French gardeners and peasants :

‘ Peuple, tu es mon jardinier,
Jardinier dans le verger, jardinier dans le potager,
Jardinier dans le champ même.
Dans tes champs les plus étendus je ne vois pas une
seule mauvaise herbe.’

(And we can only envy wistfully.)

If Péguy makes great claims for God’s chosen quick-witted

Frenchmen, we who believe with Milton in 'God's Englishmen' are not going to quarrel with him.

This interchange of image and significance springs from no confusion of thought. The well-ordered gardens and the well-ordered souls, the competent drainage and the disciplined habit of Hope, are but two aspects of the same thing. The insertion of the Eternal in the temporal is the central idea of Péguy's mysticism.

'Car l'Eternité même est dans le temporel,
Et l'arbre de la Grâce est raciné profond
Et plonge dans le sol et touche jusqu'au fond,
Et le temps est lui-même un temps intemporel.'

Is not this the 'natural-supernatural' of Carlyle?

The flanking tower on the other side of Péguy's Cathedral is of course the Commonwealth. The foundations were laid in his schooldays. 'Il faut que Péguy fasse du Latin' a discerning teacher had said at his primary school, steering him past the commercial school to the Lycée and the University. With us too—notably in Scotland—Latin has always been the high-road by which a gifted boy rises from the parish school to the university—and further; but Latin can never be to us what it is to a Frenchman, whose language, literature, law, and tradition come in an unbroken line from the Roman province of Gaul.

Péguy drew his ardent Republicanism as much from 'la cité antique' as from the principles of the French Revolution (which he rather oddly described as a 'mouvement de l'ancienne France') and the Liberal theorists of the nineteenth century. In his student days he was captured by the vision of the socialist state. 'Marcel,' in which he describes this 'Cité harmonieuse,' has not yet been reprinted. We know its contents only from the gently ironical account Péguy gives in one of the Cahiers of this 'Socialisme jeune homme—socialisme un peu enfant.' Difficulties are ignored, human nature responds like a machine, the result is that deadly virtuous state which causes no misgiving to logical youth, but strikes a chill to the heart of experience acquainted with the chances and changes of dear, imperfect human society.

With Socialism as a practical political party Péguy was soon at odds. The shifts and compliances of any political party would probably have repelled so pure an idealist. The socialist party was anti-nationalist and anti-militarist, and Péguy was a

Frenchman and a soldier. It attacked not only clericalism but Catholicism, and Péguy was a Christian and a passionate lover of liberty.

'*La Solidarité socialiste*,' fellowship with all workers and with the dispossessed, remained a sacred principle. Towards the Bourgeoisie—'il faut le dire'—his attitude was as austere as that to the Pharisees in the New Testament—yet there must have been good Pharisees as, we hope, that there are good Bourgeois.

Péguy accused that much condemned class of infecting the working classes with their own distaste for work, but the accusation is not based on obvious or clearly defined grounds—at least not in any of the writings republished so far. The portentous power of money in modern life, replacing the more spiritual forces of kingship, birth, and privilege, was in his view cleaving society, as never before, into two entirely separate and therefore hostile masses, the rich and the poor.

At odds with so much in the tendencies of his time, and at the same time so penetrated with Christian faith, a weaker man than Péguy would have fallen back on the counsel of despair that this life is a state of probation and the Kingdom of God must be realised elsewhere. To Péguy '*le Salut*' could never mean individual salvation. It meant the Kingdom of God manifested in the Republic of France. '*La Cité Charnelle*'—the City of Men—is the very body of the City of God; service to the one builds up the other.

'Ainsi Dieu ne sait pas, ainsi le divin Maître
Ne sait quel retenir et placer hors de lieu
Et pour lequel tenir, et s'il faut vraiment mettre
L'amour de la patrie après l'amour de Dieu.'

The French education department does for the clever sons of the proletariat what the Church used to do in the Middle Ages, guides them up the steps of the educational ladder to the *Ecole Normale* and the *Baccalauréat*, then, in turn, uses them in all her intellectual services. Like the Church she too may rear in her bosom heretics who throw off her yoke and criticise her methods.

At the age of eighteen Péguy had served his year of military service with such capacity that he attained the rank of a sergeant. The next few years were given to classical studies in the old secluded College of *Ste. Barbe*. Péguy could never speak without emotion of how easily he might have missed the inestimable gift of classical

studies. These were never a means to a practical end with him. They were part—a large part—of his preparation for the understanding of life. He grasped the continuity of the long course of human civilisation. To him, as to Hugo, the modern fireplace represented the sacred family hearth, the doorway of a suburban house the threshold with all its sanctities, the beggar on the road was one of Jove's suppliants. What Keats found in Chapman's Homer, Péguy had found in the dark old-fashioned library at Sainte Barbe.

Once, in his middle life, in a pause in the rain, during autumn manœuvres, a chance word sends his thoughts back to the severe but withal pleasant library at Sainte Barbe, softly lit up by hanging lamps. 'I saw again my youth; the youth of the poets; of Homer and of the early world; wanderings through ages long dead; pictures that the eye of man will never see again, systems forever past away.'

Two pictures we have of Péguy at Sainte Barbe, not incompatible. One is his own recollection—'Péguy cet ardent et sombre et stupide jeune homme tout frais débarqué à Paris.' What his friends saw was a Péguy small, oddly dressed, at once dominant and tender-hearted; always aflame with some generous cause, making imperative demands on the slender purses of his friends. This domination over his fellows followed him to the Ecole Normale.

Though successful in his studies he did not complete his course. The passion for independence, the restless instinct for production, drove Péguy out into the world in 1897. He did not take his degree. He had done something more remarkable. He had produced his first vast poem. The subject of course was Jeanne d'Arc.

The material history of the book is delightfully young and extravagant and absurd. A publisher was an unnecessary middle-man. Péguy and his extraordinarily generous comrades brought out at their own (ill-spared) expense a volume running to seven hundred pages odd, beautifully if eccentrically typed, weighing 3 lb. avoirdupois! It fell by its own weight dead from the press.

Péguy never sought to check the mighty volume of his inspiration, either by condensation or rejection. He admits the fact. 'A vast mass of something more than thought, a whole world presses at every moment on the point of an author's pen. It is as if the ocean tried to pass through a slit, no wonder that wave

presses upon wave.' The whole spiritual world was pressing on the soul of Péguy to find utterance.

In the dedication of this remarkable poem there is a note which rings through all Péguy's later works.

'A toutes celles et à tous ceux qui auront vécu leur vie
humaine,
A toutes celles et à tous ceux qui seront morts de leur mort
humaine.
Pour tâcher de porter remède au mal universel humain.
Prenne sa part de la dédicace qui voudra.'

The faithful Péguyiste looks forward to the appearance of the original Jeanne in the collected works; meanwhile we have the portion published ten years later as '*Le Mystère de la Charité de Jeanne d'Arc*.'

It finds and leaves Jeanne a child of fourteen. It consists merely of a dialogue and meditation, it goes to the quick of Péguy's faith and—dramatically—to the springs of Jeanne's inspiration.

She is in the fields, sorrowful even unto death for the woes of France. Her little friend Hauviette, with the adorable good sense of the French working woman, reminds her that, in spite of rampant evils, the labours of the field, the toil of honest men like their fathers, goes on from year to year. Madame Gervase, the orthodox saint, urges the consolations of the Faith. But Jeanne's sorrow springs from a source deeper than the horrors of War and Famine. The violence of the oppressors, the despair of the oppressed are mortal sins. Can souls thus damn themselves and be lost eternally?

(It is a standing quarrel of Péguy's with the Church. Socialist solidarity could not tolerate the closing of the gates of a human city on the meanest of its citizens, far less the eternal closing of the City of God on any created soul.)

The Church, alas! in the person of Madame Gervase, has but one answer: Where the sacrifice of the Cross has not availed men can only acquiesce in silence. But the heart of Jeanne (and of Péguy) will not acquiesce. Like Moses and like Paul, she is willing to lose her part in Life for her people's sake.

'Et s'il faut pour sauver de l'Absence éternelle
Les Ames des damnés s'affolant de l'Absence,
Abandonner mon âme à l'Absence éternelle,
Que mon âme s'en aille en l'Absence éternelle.'

Then, rising to the last height of daring, Péguy and Jeanne summon an august Third to join in their protest.

'Comme il sentait monter à lui sa mort humaine
Sans voir sa mère en pleurs et douloureuse en bas
Droite au pied de la croix, ni Jean ni Madeleine.
Jésus mourant pleura sur la mort de Judas.'

'Et c'est alors qu'il sut la souffrance infinie,
C'est alors qu'il connut, c'est alors qu'il apprit,
C'est alors qu'il sentit l'infime angoisse
Et cria comme un fou l'épouvantable agonie.
Clameur dont chancela Marie encore debout—

Et, par pitié du père il eut sa mort humaine.'

Surely that Father of the Church who inserted into the creed 'He descended into Hell' was one who felt this 'solidarité avec les damnés.'

Jeanne is left with the cry on her lips, 'Who shall be saved? How may they be saved?'

There is another startling heresy in the 'Mystère.' In their meditation on the Passion the verse: 'And they all forsook Him and fled' fell to Jeanne, and at the tone of her voice Madame Gervase foresees danger. Slowly, deliberately comes the comment: 'I think if I had been there I would not have forsaken him.' Madame Gervase is aghast. She dare not hear such blasphemy against the greatest of the saints. Jeanne gathers conviction as she goes on. 'The French would never have forsaken him—neither French knights nor French peasants; our own folk of Lorraine would never have forsaken him.'

Other countries and other cultures (except the classic) did not exist for Péguy, but we, whose sons were to fall in defence of his France, may be glad that almost the only reference to the English in his hitherto republished works is this honourable testimony from Jeanne:

'Je n'aime pas les Anglais. Je dis jamais des Anglais n'auraient laissé faire cela.'

The 'Mystère' ends on the words, 'Orléans, qui êtes au pays de Loire.' She knows at least where deliverance may begin. No later *Mystères* carry on the life and martyrdom of Jeanne, though we know that they were planned on a vast scale. We shall never read that prayer of Jeanne on the eve of her betrayal for the sins

of the city of Paris of which Péguy spoke once to Halévy, walking in the gardens of the Luxembourg among the gay, careless crowd. At the end of the long poem 'Eve' is a beautiful parallel between Sainte Geneviève and Jeanne, the two saintly shepherdesses who at the Day of Judgment will lead the wandering flock of the people of Paris—'peuple prodigue, peuple préféré'—into their fold. Here Péguy's device of close repetition with small but significant changes is telling.

' Dans un vallon semé de bouleaux et de hêtres
L'une est morte au milieu d'un peuple prosterné,
Sur un haut échafaud de bouleaux et de hêtres
L'autre est morte au milieu d'un peuple consterné.'

We take farewell of Jeanne in words where we feel the tenderness of Péguy, *père de famille*.

' Et l'autre dans le ciel n'est qu'une jeune enfant
Telle qu'elle partit de sa jeune Lorraine,
Car cet homme de guerre et ce grand capitaine
Ne fut jamais qu'une humble et courageuse enfant.'

' Qui faut-il sauver ? Comment faut-il sauver ? ' In 1897, when Péguy left the Ecole Normale, it was plain 'who' was to be saved ; the finding of the 'how' was to occupy Péguy and the more ardent spirits in France for the next two years. Incidentally one Alfred Dreyfus was to be saved from a wrongful condemnation ; at all costs France was to be saved from the ignominy of consenting to injustice.

We must turn our back resolutely on Péguy's Dreyfusisme and—far more reluctantly—on the heroic years devoted to the Cahiers de la Quinzaine. Our concern is with the poetry of Péguy. Only Péguy himself has the privilege of unlimited paper and print. With no writer is it more difficult to separate Prose and Poetry. The rhythmical prose has often as much 'lyrisme' as the 'vers libre' in which the Mystères are written. The Cahiers are generally polemical—and fierce at that—but they are strewn with exquisite things : literary criticism that goes to the quick as in the meditation on Hugo's 'Boaz Endormi' ; vivid portraiture of men and incident like the lonely death-bed of Bernard Lazare, one of the protagonists in the Dreyfus case ; first-hand experiences deeply pondered over as in the reference to the misunderstanding with Halévy—a passage one cannot read without emotion.

In 1910 Péguy was free to return to the secret ambition of his life, the completing of the history and the martyrdom 'of the greatest saint who ever lived.'

In the open letter to Halévy (1910), which is the source of our most innerly knowledge of Péguy, he announces—playfully indeed, but with a substratum of seriousness touched with bitterness—that he is returning in his outer man and inner habit to the peasant strain from which he sprang. He would be a fool, he declared, to renounce so great an advantage in the sacred task before him. For 'archaeological' treatment of historical subjects he had always had a not quite reasonable contempt. The 'éternel' being rooted in the 'temporel,' to understand the eternal spirit in Jeanne her poet must realise her tradition and habit in the 'temporel.' Péguy believed that the living tradition of the peasant could link up with the fifteenth century.

Another development in Péguy's inner life was a further preparation for his great work. He had gone back definitely and whole-heartedly to the Catholic tradition—not however to the Catholic fold. He had married at the age of twenty-four the daughter of a free-thinking, socialist family. Madame Péguy had not followed her husband in what was a return to him, but would have been a conversion for her. She refused to throw aspersions on their union by consenting to a religious ceremony. True to the larger fidelity Péguy respected her scruples. By this course he cut himself off from full communion with the Church. He knew no hesitation, but he knew bitter anguish in consequence. His children were not baptised, but by a curious, tender impulse he dedicated 'ces trois jeunes têtes' to the Motherly care of Notre-Dame. There are touching references to this in the 'Mystère of the Holy Innocents'—these other unbaptised little saints.

These years had seen the return of many French men of letters to the Catholic Church. To many, perhaps most, the attraction was the living authority. Here, in a perplexed world, was something stable, at once a discipline of life and an authoritative witness to the Divine Order. To the historic foundations they were comparatively indifferent. With Péguy it was far otherwise. He was drawn back to the Catholic tradition by the compelling attraction of Jesus and Mary, of Louis and Jeanne, of the Communion of Saints. His nature—with all its human weaknesses, anger and bitterness—was essentially akin to theirs.

He described himself as 'a Catholic of the fifteenth century'

and so felt free to change the vastness of the world as apprehended by science for the small familiar home where God and man made one household. A poet and not a speculative philosopher, he could best reach essentials in this fashion.

One of Péguy's intimate friends has said of him, 'Péguy could not be a saint, he was too much in the tide of affairs, too much absorbed in his Cahiers, *too much père de famille*'—a curious disqualification in a religion whose appeal is: 'Which of you being a Father . . . ?'

The piety of Péguy centred in the life of the household—the poor household. A long and—*il faut le dire*—rather artificial poem on the Escutcheons of Jesus and of Satan suddenly blossoms into verses sweet and fresh as wayside flowers. They start with the simpler creation, the stable so dear to Péguy's heart.

Les armes de Jésus c'est la belle provande,
Epars au râtelier c'est le thym, la lavande
Et la rose et l'œillet et la souple guirlande.

Les armes de Jésus c'est le bon voisinage
Entre les pauvres gens, c'est le pauvre village
Et l'Eglise au milieu, c'est le compagnonnage

Entre bons compagnons, c'est le pèlerinage
Entre bons pèlerins, c'est le pauvre ménage
Entre l'homme et la femme et le long mariage.

Les armes de Jésus c'est les enfants bien sages
Assis au coin du feu ; c'est les belles images
Qu'on voit sur les vitraux et c'est les trois rois mages.

Les armes de Jésus c'est la pauvre famille,
Les frères et la sœur, les garçons et la fille,
Le fuseau lourd de laine et la savante aiguille.'

(There were two boys and one little daughter in the Péguy household.) Children play in and out of the 'Porches' of the Mystères of the Holy Innocents and the Second Virtue, and Péguy watches their ways with infinite tenderness ; the little joke of turning the back of their heads for the father's kiss—a ceremony so irrelevant to them, so significant to him—the running backwards and forwards 'like little dogs' on the way to vespers ; the awe that falls on the listening parent at some lovely, unconscious word of the child.

Fatherhood was more to Péguy than delight in a child's vitality or the melting of heart over its innocence.

'There is,' he says in the last book he wrote, 'a universal secret, suspected by men from thirty-five onwards, accepted with silent conviction by men of forty but never divulged, the certain knowledge that no man is happy nor has been since the beginning of the world.' But—and here comes in the most beautiful of all the tricks that Hope is constantly playing on us—by this time the man has most probably a fourteen-year-old son. His one obsession is that he shall be happy. 'What has never succeeded up till now is, he is convinced, going to happen in this one instance.'

Was it because life had been so hard to him that Péguy gives to the Second Virtue the place St. Paul gives to Charity and Luther to Faith?

He had seen this indomitable Hope working in sodden fields with Beauceron peasants; he found her again among the *menu peuple* of Paris arriving by the early suburban train every Monday morning.

'Je suis, dit Dieu, Maître des trois Vertus.

La Foi est une épouse fidèle,
La Charité est une mère ardente,
Mais l'Espérance est une toute petite fille.

Je suis, dit Dieu, le Maître des Vertus.

La Foi est celle qui tient bon dans les siècles des siècles,
La Charité est celle qui se donne dans les siècles des siècles,
Mais ma petite Espérance est celle qui se lève tous les matins.'

And in another place:

'La Foi est une épouse fidèle,
La Charité est une mère,
Une mère ardente, pleine de cœur,
Ou une sœur aînée qui est comme une mère,
Mais l'Espérance est une petite fille de rien de tout.'

But it is just 'this little girl of no account'—this darling child who lives with poor folk in dark cottages, who dances with her hands full of flowers in the Procession of the Fête-Dieu—it is she who gives life to the other Virtues, who leads the revolving worlds, who guides us all in the grey procession of our common days.

Twenty times she sends us on the same errand, twenty times she seems to deceive us. She seems to think that we, like her, are eternal and have all time before us.

‘Comme elle se trompe ! Comme elle a raison !
Car n’avons-nous pas toute la vie devant nous ?
La seule qui compte, la Vie éternelle ?’

And the old man has as much life before him as the child, or rather more, for Life lies in front of him no longer masked by mortality.

‘Entre la Vie et lui il n’y a plus rien.
Il est au bord de la lumière.’

In the two *Mystères*—as is fitting in two corresponding ‘*Porches*’—the same symbolical figures recur. Rather the two poems are like two movements in a great piece of music where each lends the other certain recurring melodies. There is this clear, sweet, singing *motif* of Hope for one, for another the *motif* solemn and tender of Night.

‘O Nuit, O ma fille la Nuit, la plus religieuse de mes filles,
Tu me glorifies dans le sommeil plus que ton frère le jour ne
me glorifie dans le Travail.’

Night glorifies God chiefly in this—that she causes man, that anxious, rebel child, to surrender himself into the divine keeping.

‘Tu les ensevelis dans le silence et l’ombre
Et dans le salutaire oubli
De la mortelle inquiétude du jour.’

In one movement the two melodies are exquisitely interwoven.

It begins with the saddest admission that can be made. There are souls so broken with life that they have no more desire for Paradise or for Beatitude, only for rest and forgetfulness.

‘Dona eis, Domine, pacem
Et requiem aeternam.
Parcequ’ils auront connu certaines histoires de la terre
Et qu’ils ne voudront plus entendre de rien que
D’un champs de repos
Et de se coucher pour dormir.’

Shall it be said that there is no healing for such mortal wounds

but the slow beneficent descent of a beautiful summer night on the parched earth ?

' La lente descension d'une nuit éternelle.
O Nuit, sera-t-il dit que je t'aurai créée la dernière
Et que mon Paradis et que ma Béatitude
Ne sera qu'une grande Nuit de clarté,

Le coucher de soleil d'un éternel été ? '

Then there breaks in that other melody, as of a lark in a clear sky.

All this must needs be.

' S'il n'y avait pas ma petite Espérance
C'est par ma petite Espérance seule que l'Eternité sera. '

He had need of Hope, this Péguy, for life was full of labour and anxiety, of exasperation and disappointed ambitions.

All these, and a defiant insistence on his own worst faults of style are reflected in his last poem ' Eve ' (1913). The length of the poem, the constant repetitions, are calculated to put the reader off at a first trial. Yet if he tries to skip he risks missing the beautiful things that are scattered even in the most arid contexts.

In a certain passage in the inexhaustible letter to Halévy, Péguy claims that a man never writes so freshly, so unexpectedly as when he starts the day's work tired. It is as if he were suddenly reinforced by all the efforts of all the days that have left him tired. Was it at the end of a long morning of work at the white deal ink-stained table, or in the silence ' d'une veillée à la lampe familiale ' that the miracle happened and the verses were written which were to be the consolation of France a year later in the days of her pride and her sorrow ?

The long poem is—*il faut le dire*—in the doldrums, in an exhaustive arraignment of our own age ; you turn the leaf (162) and there you have them—the verses that generations of French boys and youths will learn and repeat to one another as Péguy and Halévy recited Hugo ' bras dessus, bras dessous. '

' Heureux ceux qui sont morts pour la Cité Charnelle
Mais pourvu que ce fut dans une juste guerre,
Heureux ceux qui sont morts pour quatre coins de terre,
Heureux ceux qui sont morts d'une mort solennelle. '

The verses are known even in this country and are bound to

become better known. Reverently, thankfully, we leave our heroic dead where they fell, but Péguy follows them through the hour of death to the Day of Judgment. When they are weighed in the scales of Divine Justice

‘Que Dieu mette avec eux un peu de cette terre
Qui les a tant perdus et qu’ils ont tant aimée.’

The menace of Germany had sunk so deeply into the heart of Frenchmen that many must have shared the experience of Péguy in 1905 when the war cloud had risen in Morocco and Germany was demanding the dismissal of M. Delcassé.

‘We had arrived that morning preoccupied as usual—the beginning of the week is always a busy time . . . we are deeply interested in the fate of empires . . . but like all honest men and plain citizens, we have our private cares. . . . Then we all knew that the danger of the German invasion was imminent and real. The news did not spread from lip to lip as with ordinary news ; it was not news, it was the confirmation of a fact long and deeply known in each man’s consciousness. It spread from one to the other like the contagion of inner conviction. It was in his own consciousness that each one found the complete, immediate, immovable knowledge of the fact. It had always been there like the reverberation from a deeply sunk memory.’

July 29, 1914. All Péguy is in the two lines written to his friend Lotte (probably on a post-card) on this date :

‘If you didn’t see Paris yesterday, you have seen nothing. The city of Ste. Geneviève is still herself.’

He had always stuck to the active branch of the army, though his age entitled him to be in the Territorials. He joined up the first day.

We have trodden that path so often with brave men, French and English, we know the exaltation, the comradeship, the confident start. With stricken hearts we have followed the sudden arrest of the onward march, the rumours followed by terrible certainty, the bewilderment, the confusion, the forced marches, the awful ignorance of the large trend of events. We know of Péguy, his peasant-bred insensibility to hardship, his fatherly persuasive ways with the brave, undisciplined Parisian boys who made up his company. We gain a sense—one hardly knows how—of a great content, a kind of inner radiance. *La petite Espérance*

marched with him through days of hunger, weariness and anxiety. Once when he had given the order to his men sleeping on the roadside, 'Allons, Dix-neuvième, debout,' a broken voice replied 'There is no nineteenth company left.' 'As long as I am here, *mon vieux*, there is still a Nineteenth Company.'

Two little incidents soften the tension. After a march of sixty kilometres, two hundred exhausted men turned into a hayloft where there was barely room for a hundred. A poor woman with young children came out hurriedly. 'Where are you going, Madame?' 'Oh, sir, these poor fellows must have a rest.' 'I won't hear of your leaving, Madame; there is nowhere else you can go to. Here, boys, make room. These children must sleep here.'

On September 3 the 19th Company occupied a deserted convent, and Péguy spent the night gathering flowers to place at the feet of Notre-Dame. Did he remind her of the 'trois jeunes têtes' once committed to her care in the Cathedral at Chartres?

It was on September 5, on the Ourcq, in a section of the battle of the Marne, that Death and Péguy met.

'What can we know of Death who understand so little of life?' asks an ancient sage. All his days Péguy had laboured and wrestled to understand life. He was to find death a simpler problem. Once he had written of the fall of night on the loneliness of Calvary,

'O nuit si douce au cœur parce que tu accomplis
Et tu calmes comme un baume.
Nuit sur cette montagne et dans cette vallée.'

And now we think of the fall of that warm September night on the Ourcq Valley and on that one figure among many hundreds,

'Couché sur le sol à la face de Dieu.'

FLORENCE A. MACCUNN.

MERAH.

WE came upon it quite suddenly; borne round a bend of the river that but a few minutes before had been raging in a mile-long rapid, our raft glided out into a long pool of unrippled water. The trees that stood bathing their toes along the edge were reflected without a tremor, seeming to stretch deep, deep down to the blue glory of the mirrored sky. The very atmosphere was tense with silence, through which the far-off roar of the rapid sounded as the deep diapason of an organ in a dream. Stillness brooded like a presence over the place—a stillness that it was sacrilege to break.

And there it stood, Merah the forgotten town, once the capital of all the country-side—its bank, once so crowded with sampans and washing rafts, deserted and overgrown, broken only here and there by an almost indistinguishable track where the forest animals came down to drink. Gaunt timbers stood upright, the bones of decaying houses, and a few pisang trees and a solitary palm alone remained of its carefully tended gardens; nothing else could be seen from the river. Over all was flung the cloak of the lalang grass, that harbinger of nature which is ever the first to sweep back over the works of man as soon as he releases his hold on some hard-won plot of land.

We drifted on. The awe and beauty of the place were too deep to be broken by the sound of paddles. Almost imperceptibly we drifted to the centre of the pool, and now we were walled in on every side with a curtain of trees, on a lake with no apparent opening, forgotten—forgotten, as Merah is forgotten, swallowed up by the jungle to die and decay, ever for ever.

Suddenly a fish leaped. The reflections shivered and broke in the ripple, waving and beckoning. It was as though the spell that bound us were released. The rowers dipped their paddles and we glided to the bank at Merah—Merah the forgotten, Merah the dead.

The bank was steep and thorn-entangled, but where the animals came down to drink we forced our way up to the level lalang-covered clearing that was Merah. Creepers had twined around the house-posts and with their sinuous fingers had torn the ataps from the roofs, and everywhere the lalang grass stood deep and

rioted among the fallen timbers. Windows stared blank eyes upon the desolation, and a Perak robin perched on a gable-end started to whistle its mocking little song.

The sun was drawing to evening, and there we pitched our camp. As night closed in, the coolies lit a fire with planks torn from the mouldering houses. Sitting around it in a ring with sarongs huddled over their heads they told strange stories, laughed and jibed, now and again bursting into weird *pantuns* and songs; but their laughter rang hollow and they sang in bravado to keep the evil spirits from them.

The fire grew to embers, the songs ceased, the camp slept; yet how could one sleep?—the night was alive, intangibly alive. A little wind sprang up and stirred the trees. The moon arose and cast a white patch through the open tent door. Outside the place of desolation was bathed in light, mystically still. A beetle whirred and piped from the ground a few yards off. The houses cast black shadows and nothing seemed to stir. Desolate, desolate and forgotten. The little breath of wind arose again, ruffling the surface of the lalang grass; it struck coldly on the brow—cold as the moonlight; it rippled the surface of the river, and the moon-path on the waters wavered and winked, to grow still and straight as the breath died in a far-off rustle among the trees. Then something stirred; there was no sound, only a sense of stealthiness, the sleeping jungle instinct awakened. It stirred and came slowly down the jungle track, ghostly pale in the moonlight, gliding and rippling its great body, alert and tense, yet scenting not the proximity of man. Surely there was a spell upon Merah that night, woven around even my lord the tiger that he knew not the scent of man. He came on across that path that man had so lately trod, across the lalang patch of Merah, and down to the river at a point but a few yards from where the raft lay tied. Ghostly his flanks gleamed in moonlight as he stood and looked out over the water. Motionless he remained, yet sensed not the man who was almost touching him. Then he lowered his head, crouching to drink his fill. Ripples spread out from his mouth, which in the moonlight shone as a glory around his head, and the lapping of his tongue sounded like the crooning of the sea. His shoulders stood out like the foothills, and his back was the long slope of a mountain ridge. His head was smooth as rice-fields seen from the mountain-top, and as the wet paddy swamps gleam, so gleamed his fur in the moonlight. His sides

rose and fell with his breathing, striped in pale amber and jet. His tail moved slowly to and fro, stirring a long bramble behind him. So he drank a deep, deep draught amid the silence, gazing out over the unruffled waters. Then he had finished and raised himself, with pearl drops glistening from his beard, and his busy lips sucking dry the fur around his mouth. And he stretched each muscle of his body in a ripple that ran from tail to head, leisurely, long drawn out, as one who feels that life is good. Then he turned. Silently, as he had come, he slipped away as the shadow of a cloud slips over the hill-side, and was gone.

Once more the desolation of Merah swept down—Merah the forgotten. In all their gauntness the houses stood out black in the moonlight. Once more the night breeze rustled down from the mountain, crooning in the lalang grass 'Merah decays—Merah that once was man's. Merah is forgotten, forgotten. Merah is desolate.'

C. S. DURST.

DO CATS THINK?

I.

TO-DAY when standing at my window I noticed a pied wagtail running about in the road below in search of the small crumbs the starlings, sparrows, and others had left, when a big cat came over the road on its way home to the house next door. When within about four yards of the wagtail he stopped short, his body stiffened, and with eyes fixed on the bird he crouched down on the ground, and continued in that position motionless as a piece of stone except that the tip of his tail curved and uncurved and moved from side to side. The predatory instinct was alight and fiercely burning in him. Then came the advance—the slow crawling movement which is scarcely perceptible to a creature directly in front. The crawling movement continued until he was within about six feet of his prey, the wagtail meanwhile going on with his busy search for crumbs and appearing to take no notice of the cat—knowing, I suppose, that a stroke of his wings at any moment would place him out of danger, and that the exact moment had not yet come. Then the cat, when so near his bird, so intent on it, all at once stood up, unstiffened, and turning walked away deliberately to his own garden-gate and went in!

Now a cat cannot see a bird within easy distance on the ground without the desire for a bird, the most compelling impulse he knows, being roused in him; and that first stillness and fixed attention is but the first of a series of movements which go on automatically to the finish—till he makes his dash or spring, or till the bird flies away. Why then did this particular cat behave as he did and abandon a pursuit which was just as promising as many another he had engaged in? Here we are confronted with the old unsolved problem: Do animals reflect? Is even the mentally highest among them capable, in a case like this, of recognising that the thing contemplated is impossible, and that the chase might as well be abandoned?

I really think he is; and actions like the one described, and many other actions of cats I have observed, serve to convince me that some of the higher animals, and especially in this largest-brained and most perfect mammalian, have something more than

just the unreflecting intelligence which we find in all creatures, from whales and elephants to insects—something which in many instances cannot easily be distinguished from what we call reflection in ourselves.

The case of this next-door cat has served to remind me of another cat, the valued pet of a lady friend of mine who lived near London and did all she could to attract the birds to her grounds, also all she could to break her cat of his bird-hunting habits.

In summer, afternoon tea was always partaken of in the large garden at the back, or in the verandah overlooking it. An old apple-tree grew on the lawn, and the birds at tea-time used to congregate on its branches, waiting to be fed. She would then take a plateful of crumbs of bread and cake and throw these on the grass under the tree. The cat, having discovered this habit of his mistress, would always turn up at tea-time, and as soon as the crowd of birds dropped down on the crumbs and were busily engaged picking them up, he would begin his stalk, crawling in his crouching attitude across the open green space of the lawn, and invariably just before the moment for making his dash they would fly up into the branches and wait till he got tired of waiting for them to come down. Then he would go back and sit beside his mistress's chair, watching the birds drop down again until the becrumbed bit of ground was full of them, and he would stalk them again with the same result as before.

My friend was distressed at her cat's action at first, and for several days tried to stop it, but the cat always defeated her, and in the end it began to amuse her to watch her pet's vain efforts to catch her little pensioners. She would say to her guests when taking up the plate of crumbs, 'Now my cat is going to exhibit his talents for your admiration'; and when the cat made his stalk and returned to them there would be much laughter at his expense. She would say too: 'How wonderful that so intelligent an animal should go on day after day trying to do something he can't do and never discovering that it can't be done! I dare say he will go on to the end without ever finding out that it is impossible to capture birds on the lawn by stalking them.'

But the cat didn't go on to the end with the same method. One afternoon, to her surprise, when she took the crumbs he went with her, and after she had thrown them on the grass under the tree he seated himself in the very middle of the becrumbed area and waited for the birds to come down and be caught. The birds

overhead waited for him to go away ; and a full hour was passed in this way—the cat very patient, the birds chirping and scolding and going and coming ; but they wouldn't come down. Then at last the cat returned to his mistress and the birds had their meal in peace. The stalk was not attempted then or ever again. But on the following afternoon the cat went again and placed himself in the middle of the crumbs, and again waited a full hour for the birds, and then as on the day before he gave it up. On the third day the whole thing was repeated, and the result was as before.

On the fourth afternoon the crumbs were taken to the usual place ; the lady came back to the table, and everyone prepared to look and laugh at the cat once more. But they were disappointed. He never moved : the birds came in their usual numbers and had their meal, and the cat looked at them from his place beside his mistress, and from that day he made no further attempt to capture them.

In this instance the cat had made a fool of himself all the time—a bigger fool when he changed his strategy than before—but the very fact that he did change it appears to show reflection. He didn't know the mind of a bird as well as we do, but he had hit on the idea—one *must* use the word in this case—that it was his conspicuous advance over the smooth lawn which alarmed and sent them away ; that if he dispensed with the advance and established himself beforehand where the food was and sat still they would come to devour it, and he being on the spot would have no difficulty in catching them ! After giving this second plan three days' trial he was convinced that it was as useless as the former one, and so gave it up for good.

I have seen, and no doubt many have seen, similar instances in dogs of blunders which could not have been made if the animal had not tried by thinking to find out how to get what he wanted. Such cases are too common to be related, and I only give one because it is rather amusing. The friend who related it to me had a dog whose chief pleasure in winter was to lie on a patch of sunshine on the floor. He preferred that to the fire. In the morning he would repair to the room where the sunshine first made a patch on the floor. One morning he arrived too soon and found his sunshine patch still on the wall. Knowing, one supposes, that it would eventually get down to the floor he sat down to watch and wait, but with manifest impatience. At last the golden patch

of light got down to a box standing against the wall and covered the top of it as with a yellow drapery, and the dog to accelerate its slow movement or pull it down began vigorously scratching at it with his paws and seemed very much surprised and puzzled at not being able to get it down to the floor !

II.

The next-door cat, described as stalking a wagtail in the foregoing part, was in a village over against Falmouth where I was spending the winter. The succeeding winter was spent in Penzance, and there were two cats in the house—a Tom and a Puss, if it be permissible to describe their sexes in that way—both black : the former of the blackness of a slightly rusted black hat, with a white spot on his breast ; the other of the blackness of a new black hat, without a white hair in her coat. Also she was very small for a full-grown cat, with the smallest head I have seen on a cat of her size, and exceptionally big eyes, pale luminous green, so that when she looked full at you her small face had the appearance of two immense shining green gems in a jet setting.

They soon established friendly relations with me, and as my sitting-room with a south aspect was always light and warm, and had easy-chairs with cushions on the seats placed at a convenient distance from the fire, they elected to spend most of their time in it. They also shared my meals—a saucer of milk at breakfast-time, a little meat or fish on a plate at early dinner, and again fish at the six o'clock tea, or if I had nothing but an egg they would have some cream. And very soon, when feeding them, I noticed the extraordinary difference in their respective characters.

Both were true cats, unlike any other creature in the animal world ; and whenever they were out in the front garden and spied me at the open window, they would run to the house, scale the porch and, clinging with claws and twisting their elastic bodies round, get on to its roof ; then with a flying leap on to a narrow ledge of the window and, after doubling another dangerous corner, jump into the room.

But Tom, albeit a town-bred indoor cat, in appearance a tame domestic animal with nothing but the sight of wild birds coming to be fed to keep the tiger burning bright in him, was at bottom a primitive—a savage ; and being of that nature his manners lacked polish. When he played he scratched ; his way of asking to be

fed was by digging his claws into my leg, and when the plate was set on the floor he would greedily monopolise it. Puss, withdrawing a little space, would look at him, then at me, and only when I pushed or dragged him back would she advance and begin to eat in her nice fastidious way.

Here I will relate a little incident which brought out the difference in character between them very strongly. In the spring I left and was absent for six months. On the day of my return I sat conversing with my landlady when Puss made her appearance at the door and, seeing me, came to a sudden stop on the threshold ; then, after staring at me for two or three seconds, she dashed across the room and, jumping on to my knee, began vigorously licking my hand ! It was an action one would expect in a dog of an affectionate disposition and with a memory good enough to recognise an old friend quickly after a long absence ; but so rare in a creature so subtle, distant, cold and self-centred as the cat as to seem incredible—almost unnatural.

By and by Tom made his appearance and, after regarding me attentively for a few seconds, sat down quietly to listen to the conversation, which however didn't appear to interest him much. It would not have surprised me if he had yawned.

When feeding the cats it amused me to play on the nervyness of Puss by dropping a pinch of salt or powdered sugar on her back without allowing her to detect me doing it. This would startle her and she would stare all round to ascertain the cause. Then, when she began to eat again, another pinch, which would alarm her still more. A third little shower falling on her back would make her dash right to the other end of the room, when she would stand glaring about her for some time ; then, gradually recovering courage but still suspicious, she would return to the plate. But a fourth pinch of salt would be too much for her and, jumping up, she would tear out of the room and down the stairs and keep away for half an hour or longer.

When I tried the experiment on Tom he paid no attention : he was too well occupied with his food to look up or to shake the sugar off. Once, to see how much he would stand, I continued dropping salt on him until it was finished and then went on with the powdered sugar, until his whole upper part from head to tail was white instead of black, and still no movement until he had finished eating ; then he quietly moved away, shook the powder off, and settled down for a nap by the fire.

If Puss ever divined that I was to blame in the matter—that I had caused the excruciating pinches of salt to fall on her—as no doubt Tom with his superior intelligence did, it caused no break in our pleasant relations; but there was another matter about which we were in perpetual disagreement.

It was perhaps but a part or a result of her nervy temperament that caused her to take an intense, an almost painful, interest in any person and in everything going on in the house. Thus, if a ring or knock came at the front door, she would jump up and rush downstairs to see who the caller was, who was answering the knock, and what it was all about. And it was the same if she heard the voices of persons talking downstairs or anywhere in the house: she must go and see about it. As these goings and comings were very frequent she needed an open door, and often, when it was cold or the window was open and I didn't want a draught in the room, I would shut it. Then there would be a great to-do: Puss would run to the door, examine it, and run back to me to inform me that it was closed, then back to the door again, and so on until I would go and open it and let her out. But she wished to be in, not out, and so would begin scratching and mewing until I opened to her again. But she would not consent to remain with the door closed. Eventually we compromised by having the door closed, but not tightly, so that with her claws she could catch the edge of the wood and pull the door open herself when the door-bell or some sound made it necessary for her to go out.

But as there were times when I would not consent to this arrangement and resolutely kept the door shut tightly, there was never an end to our quarrel—it is going on still. And she is still trying to make me understand her and do exactly what she wants me to do without blundering the thing. One could put her requests and pleadings and expostulations into words: 'Do you know that you have again shut the door so that I can't get my claws in the wood to pull it open for myself? What am I to do if a ring at the bell should come now? How many many times have I explained to you that the door must not be shut tight—that it prevents me from running out at a moment's notice to see to things? Are you so hopelessly lacking in intelligence that you cannot yet understand it?'

I cannot but believe that this cat is capable of thought—that our lasting quarrel about the door would have quickly ended if I had resolutely closed it against her wish at the first. But she

distinctly recognises that I am master of the door and that it is only through me that she can have it in the position she desires, and that as I have frequently shown myself obedient to her wish she can only look on my act in shutting it tight as a blunder—a piece of stupidity on my part.

The good old phrase of 'dumb animals' has fallen into discredit since we made the discovery that animals are not dumb but have a language (all except the earthworms and slugs) by means of which they communicate with one another. It is however a limited language designed to express a few and simple things—desires and emotions in sounds familiar and easily understood, since they never vary. Thus, the cat's mewing, with but slight changes in tone, is her only way of telling you, or another cat, that she wants something, but what that something is she leaves you or the other cat to find out.

Now, when I consider the cat I have been writing about in her anxious strivings to make me understand her wants, and her manifest puzzlement and astonishment at my failure to respond to her demands when it does not suit my pleasure to do so, I can only compare her to a deaf and dumb person who has been taught little or nothing and has nothing but a few comprehensible signs with which to communicate with those around him. He is cut off by silence from us, but as he is one of our species and we know that thought is before speech and exists independent of speech, and that thought is a function of the human brain, we know that he thinks. In like manner, reading the mind of this cat as well as I am able, I come to the conclusion that she thinks—albeit her thoughts may be very few and very simple compared with those of any human being above the age of four or five, and even with those of a person born deaf and dumb.

III.

A lady in Kensington, a cat-lover, has favoured me with an account of one of her many pets which seems well worth recording.

It came about by chance that a pup, a very few days old, was sent to the house by a friend, and that the gift of a kitten, whose blue surprised eyes had not long been opened, was received at nearly the same time. My informant and her mother and sister were delighted to get them both, as they were wanting both a dog and a cat, and now they would be reared from babyhood together

and would become familiar with each other's ways and live in harmony. And it all turned out just as they had hoped. Kittie and pup slept together in one bed, fed from the same saucer and plate, and their whole time when they were not sleeping was spent in play.

When full grown the cat was very small and the dog about two-thirds the size of a collie, so that there was a considerable discrepancy in their sizes, but this made no difference in their companionship and games together ; and both were singularly gentle, nice-mannered and good-tempered animals.

When Pussy came of age she had an affair on one of her evening strolls, and later, when her time came near, she all at once became excessively anxious as to the proper place for her expected family. Every room in the house, from basement to attics, was visited in turn and minutely examined. The ladies watched her movements with deep interest without interfering except to open closed doors for her when she returned again and again to reinspect any room which had first attracted her. In due time the kittens came, and a day or two later Pussy came to the conclusion that they were not in the best room for them after all—that there was a better place in a room on the floor above.

Now the queer part of the business comes in : she did not remove nor, so far as they saw, attempt to remove them herself, but immediately trotted off in search of her friend the dog, and he, well able from long custom to understand her, got up and followed her to the spot where the kittens were lying. Then, when he had looked at them, she started off to the upper room and he after her ; but seeing that he was following empty-handed, so to speak, she doubled back and returned to the kittens, and eventually, after two or three more false starts, he understood her and, picking up one of the kittens in his mouth, followed her up the stairs to the new place. That was as far as his understanding went, and she had again to conduct him back to the others and repeat the whole performance, until in the end the kittens were all removed by the dog and she was happy in her new quarters. But only for a day : it was not the ideal spot after all, and another removal had to be made. Again the dog was summoned and did it all again, with less trouble than on the first occasion. And again Pussy became dissatisfied and there was a third removal, and from first to last there were so many removals that the ladies lost count of their number.

Now the instinct of the cat and of practically all mammals in which the young are born helpless and continue many days in that state is, when the parent desires to remove them to a safer or more suitable place, to pick them up in her mouth and remove them one by one herself. So ineradicable is this instinct that it persists in the dog after thousands of years of domestication, and we know that the cat's instincts are even less affected by such a state than the dog's. Why, then, in this case did she not obey so powerful an impulse instead of relegating the task to a dog, an animal of another species ?

Bergson would perhaps suggest or say that it was intuition, an indefinable faculty higher than either instinct or reason. There is no such thing : there is nothing but reason and instinct, or inherited memory, to prompt the actions of all animals, from earthworm and emmet to elephant. The only possible explanation of the cat's actions is that she found herself powerless, probably after trial, to accomplish the task herself ; that she then remembered her friend the dog, mentally visualising him as a big strong creature with a big mouth to carry, and remembering also that he was obedient to her and quick to respond to her wishes. And she accordingly went to him for help, and he being by chance exceptionally intelligent did not fail her, although we cannot say that his reasoning powers were equal to hers. Her action undoubtedly shows reasoning of a higher kind than that of the cat described in the first part, though that too was reasoning. His impulse was to dash at the bird, but in the pause before it could be made he listened to the still small voice of the higher faculty telling him that he would fail again as he had failed many times before, and the small voice prevailed.

IV.

The fact of telepathy is now familiar by that name to everybody. But authentic instances of telepathy between man and animals are rare, and are confined to our domestic animals that rank highest in the scale of nature. Most cases are concerned with the dog, as, for example, the very remarkable one related some years ago by Sir Rider Haggard in *The Times*. An even more remarkable case of telepathic communication between man and horse—an old Sussex squire and his favourite cob—is given by M. A. Lower,

author of 'Sussex Worthies,' in his miscellany entitled 'Contributions to Literature.'

That such cases should be extremely rare is only what might be expected, seeing that when it is undoubtedly a telepathic message, explicable in no other way, as when it produces a phantasm of the living, as it is called, it can emanate only from a mind in extreme distress or agony, or in a moment of deadly peril or suffering, and often enough at the moment of death. Again, we know that in these instances of extreme agitation there must always be a close bond of affection between sender and recipient, such as may exist between two close friends or near and dear relations and, as we also know, can and does often exist between a human being and a favourite or pet animal in the higher orders.

That such communication between mind and mind—brain-waves as they are sometimes called—should be possible between man and animals is but a further proof that they are, mentally, very near to us; that their brains function even as ours do, far as we have risen above them in all mental powers.

Here then, in conclusion of the article, I will give the first case of telepathy, as I consider it, I have met with between human being and cat.

The person concerned is the late Mrs. Barry, wife of the late Bishop Barry, and the account of what took place was written by Lady Alderson at Mrs. Barry's dictation. Mr. Ralph Alderson in looking over his late mother's papers found it, and has passed it on to me to make what use of it I wish, and I accordingly transcribe it here.

'In 1891 we left Knapdale to take up our residence in The Cloisters at Windsor. For some time before I had a favourite black cat who had the distinction of not possessing a single white hair. She was unusually attached to me on account of my having saved her life from a dog, just two minutes before her first kitten was born—she had only one. The shock to the poor thing was so great that it was with difficulty I saved her life, and her terror at every sound was so pitiful that I gave up a small empty room to her and her kitten, locking her in, and allowing no one to go near but myself. I waited on her for a whole month, until she quieted down and allowed her kitten to see the world. Ever after when she had kittens she had the same attack of nerves and required my undivided attention. We were living then in an interesting old manor-house which had belonged to Oliver Cromwell. His daughter, Mrs. Ireton,

was said to haunt the gallery : the house has always had the reputation of being haunted. I feel I ought to mention this, although I do not know whether it could in any way have affected the cat.

‘After the Bishop’s appointment up to the time of our removal the cat was much on my mind, as I dreaded the change and disturbance for her which all ordinary cats without nerves hate. But the gardener was left in the house, to take charge of it for a new tenant, so I made special arrangements that the cat should remain in his care with good board wages till I was quite settled, when I was to write for it and he would see her safely on her journey to Windsor.

‘Time went on, and I did not worry about my cat and was waiting until all was ready, when one night I had a dream. I was walking—as I thought—in the garden at Knapdale, in a path under the wall, which was a favourite place of mine and where the black cat used to follow me up and down, when I heard a piteous cry, and looking up saw my Puss, standing on the top of the wall, in lamentable plight, evidently starved to death and very weak. I awoke much disturbed, but went to sleep again, and this appearance of the cat came to me three times that night.

‘In the morning I told the Bishop that I intended to go off immediately to fetch my cat. He did his best to dissuade me from doing so, as he said I could telegraph to the gardener and the cat would arrive without any trouble. But I could not feel satisfied, and started off immediately after breakfast.

‘On my arrival at Knapdale I found the house in the possession of workmen. On entering no gardener was to be seen, and no cat. Filled with anxiety, I asked every man I met if a black cat had been seen, but with no result. At last a woman in a house near by told me that the gardener had been dismissed summarily, and being no doubt unwilling I should know it had departed and left the cat to its fate. This woman had heard the poor thing crying and had tried to get at it and give it milk, but it was always terrified and too wild to come near her. It occurred to me to go and walk under the wall I had seen in my dream, and which the cat had no doubt always associated with me, and call her. In a few minutes I saw a wild haggard face appear, gazing at me as if it could not believe the evidence of its senses, then down she came and rushed into my arms, and clung to me frantically. I carried her into the room we both remembered, and found her nothing but skin and bone and very weak. I went into the village and fed

her with milk and fish, bought a hamper into which she crawled of her own accord, and during the many hours' journey home she lay quite still and purred whenever I stroked her. She took a fancy to her new home and settled down at once.

'This story is perfectly true; who can explain the fact of the cat spirit being able to make an impression on a human spirit so as to induce me to act as I did and only just in time to save her life?'

W. H. HUDSON.

THE BAD PENNIES.

WHEN Adam fled from Eden, and our good world began,
And peasants tilled the valleys,—not so did every man;
For Sâlem was a robber, the first of all his clan,
And he called his sons Salâma, Selîm, and Suleyman.

Salâma was a sailor in the days of the great rain;
With donkeys, doves, and dragons he prayed for land in vain.—
He stole his master's daughter, he stole his camels twain,
And on the slopes of Ararat the tribe began again.

With all men's hands against them, their hands 'gainst every
man,
Still do they rob the stranger from Tangier to Ispahan,
And guard the guest in honour, that ragged roving clan,
(But now, they burn tobacco,—and powder when they can,)
And name their sons Salâma, Selîm, and Suleyman.

In the last and longest autumn, when the earth's turn comes to
die,
All the woods and harvests withered, all the seas and rivers dry,
Vast and dim shall spread the desert, not a sound and not a cry,
With a pale sun hardly shining, in a cold and cloudless sky.

Through the dust that once was cities, over sand where rivers ran,
Camel-bells shall tinkle faintly, of the world's last caravan.
Searching yet for vanished footsteps, stalks Salâma in the van;
Next him, chiding on the camels, laden down with pot and pan,
Follows greybeard Father Sâlem, last Selîm and Suleyman.

G. W. MURRAY.

THE PROVOCATOR.

BY CAPT. W. L. BLENNERHASSETT, D.S.O.

CHAPTER X.

FORTHWITH he directed his steps towards his hotel or, more properly speaking, the *postojali dvor* (or lodging-house) where he had descended on arrival. He had no difficulty in finding it, since in the Vassilievsky Island quarter of St. Petersburg all main *linii*, or streets, ran parallel to one another and were numbered successively.

His mind had intuitively adjusted itself to the police orientation of life in the capital, intensified as it was for the time being by the incidence of revolution. He did not expect to see the proprietor in the hall to welcome him, since, if the inn had really been used as the revolutionary Sondrakov's headquarters, there was but little doubt that he was still in jail, unless indeed he had fared worse. The presence of another manager therefore did not surprise him nor interfere in any way with his comfort, seeing that the personnel were still there and knew him. The downstairs porter who had known Sondrakov, confiding as usual, informed him that his room had been searched for papers, but nothing having been found his personal effects were left untouched. Unworldly as he still was, Gregory Dimitrievich marvelled at the honesty of the police, so contrary to all one had heard. It never occurred to him that his broken comb and rusty scissors were of value exclusively to himself.

He wanted to ask the porter more, but dared not, for with the wisdom of the serpent suddenly enlightening him, he bethought himself of the possibility of this good man being perhaps in the pay of the 'other side'—that is, of the 'tsarists,' for that is what they were to him now, revolutionary as he fancied he was. . . .

He silently complimented himself on his insight and pressed a little silver *chetvertak* into the not unwilling hand of the obsequious servant who had so loyally watched over his belongings. . . . This fourth part of a rouble—this portentous amount of 25 kopeks he judged well expended.

Then he requested to be given another room, unwilling as he was to return to the place associated with Jadviga. . . . His

demand was complied with, whereupon, given a number and a key, he returned to the street to seek a cheap *traktir* and have something to eat, for he felt hungry.

He imagined that his avoidance of his old room would suffice to sever him from past impressions he did not care to revive. But he was wrong. In his thoughts the fairy Jadviga appeared again and again, now as the suave temptress beguiling his drunken passion, now as the object of aversion which she had been when he came to in his cell.

For some reason or another her name and image always associated themselves in his mind with the domineering personality of the bastille of SS. Peter and Paul—with that blond giant reclining in his armchair and interrogating him in the half-darkness.

He had not dared to ask the porter about her—about Jadviga—for many reasons. No doubt she had been arrested too—dragged like the rest into the sombre recesses of Petropávlovsk. . . .

He stopped short. What if she had been among those ghastly shrouds fusilladed by the half-drunken cossack soldiery? He had not heard her name sung out like that of the Bourlakova and Miss Golmes among those reprieved—but, it could not be.

He walked on. . . . The Bourlakova—yes, he could see her even now at the supper party in her low dress smiling at Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov, whose arm passed round her massive, voluptuous shoulders—he saw her embrace him and—and . . .

But the words resounded in his ear: 'First: Maria Antonovna Bourlakova, in consideration of her full evidence—a free pardon.'

And someone—the aged Swedo-Russian police official—echoed 'No. 5.'

He stopped again. A 'free pardon—in consideration of her full evidence.' What could that mean? . . . Had she betrayed the man in whose arms she had lain—not more than a few hours previously—whose lips she had felt—to whom she had tendered hers? . . .

He shook his head grimly and passed on. What could have been the feelings of the condemned, white-shrouded Sondrakov?

They gave one another away, did they, when it came to it—to the point of death? Then their convictions were not equal to their task. . . . They were foredoomed to failure, and all sacrifice was useless now even as the blond commissary had said. . . . They were not only dying for a lost cause, but throwing away valuable lives which might be required some other day when they

really could succeed in their revolution—when, as the blond commissary had also remarked, initial success lay with them—when the element of surprise worked for them and the tsarists had not the time to organise. . . .

So long as there were among them men like the student Belinski and women like the Muriovskaia, known as Miss Golmes and his mistress, how could they expect . . . ?

Expect . . . success ? . . . So she was the mistress of the student Belinski, this real or pretended English girl.

What was the Bourlakova, then, to Sondrakov, he wondered—what Jadviga to him ?

. . . And he lost much time trying to think what kind of a woman Jadviga was—but he could not think ill of her.

Mechanically he halted before a small *traktir* and, stealthily counting his money with his hand in his pocket, felt assured that he had plenty left. It sufficed for a purchase of civilian clothes this afternoon and for his meals and hotel bill for a long time to come.

But of the future as such he did not think even for a second.

He felt in the happy position of being able to order anything he liked, since everything in this class of tavern was good and cheap, even the wine. That in turn made him forgetful of the horrors of Petropávlovsk, which appeared incongruous with the outwardly peaceful and contented aspect of the great city.

But he was not long to be alone, for a blue-eyed, blond young man, garbed in a neat blue serge suit, politely asked permission to sit at his table. He seemed rather undersized for his age, which Gregory Dimitrievich guessed as in the early twenties, but very broad-shouldered and, beyond a doubt, well mannered.

His remarkably tidy turn-out separated him from the student class, as also his general air of prosperity, such as the somewhat ostentatious gold watch and chain, the tie-pin surmounted by a blue sapphire, and the multitude of rings on his fingers. Clearly he represented the type of a well-to-do shop assistant or store manager, or something or other of that sort. He had about him the apologetic ways of the wage-earning commercial man, graded in Russian life as the third from the bottom of the social scale—in a word a bumptious *miestchanin*, used to being snubbed even by the poorest and least influential bureaucrat or *chinovnik* of the realm.

The youth excelled in politeness as, rubbing his hands with unexpected energy, he passed angry comments on the over-crowded condition of the eating-house.

'It is different at the hotel where we live. It is full, yet everybody is comfortable.'

Gregory looked up. 'You are staying at the same inn as I?'

The other laughed. 'Not only that,' he replied, with an ironic smile, 'but I had also the honour of sharing your . . . other . . . quarters.'

Gregory blushed.

'Yes. . . . I also was arrested . . . but not for long. They released me this morning. . . . I walked all the way in after you. . . . You did not see me?'

'No,' answered Gregory Dimitrievich. 'What ever did they arrest you for? Were—you—at the supper party?'

'No, rather not,' was the retort, 'though my sister was . . . as you know. . . . But there is nothing in being arrested in times like these. They carry prudence to the point of virtue. They lifted nearly everybody of note . . . in the hotel . . . including the proprietor, whom they shot. . . .'

'Shot . . . what for?'

'Murdered, if you like. Well, because it appears the inn was the headquarters of Sondrakov and his revolutionary gang.'

'He was a revolutionary, then?' queried Gregory, for he thought it wisest to simulate ignorance, at all events until he knew more of the stranger.

'They say so. . . . Blest if I know! . . . though I suspect they are not far wrong. . . .'

'You mentioned that your sister was . . . at the supper party. Who was she . . . may I ask?' He looked at him hard.

The youth seemed uneasy. 'Well . . . if you must know . . . her name is Jadviga Alexandrovna Oushakova.'

The words fell on Gregory's ears with the weight of thunder. He turned pale with excitement.

But it was not advisable to show his embarrassment, which he imagined he had concealed. . . . For the other was now looking at the ground, avoiding his glance. His fingers were twitching nervously, and to all appearance he seemed to blush.

From that moment Gregory took him for genuine.

'What . . . happened to . . . her?'

The other man's reply was barely audible. 'She was arrested, like you . . . and . . . so they tell me, they knouted her . . . but she was released. . . .'

'You don't know for certain?'

'No'; he was trying to look more self-assured. 'You see, I cannot help loving my sister, but——'

'But . . . what?'

'She . . . and I live in a different world. . . .'

'How?'

'Need I explain? . . . Must I? . . . I mean, my poor sister travels on a yellow passport. . . .'

Gregory did not know what that signified. It was a custom of Tsardom according to which a woman who had once fallen must irrevocably and for ever be content with a yellow-coloured identity paper.

'I am very sorry, but I do not quite understand. . . .'

The youth explained as best he could. 'Of course,' he added, 'officially I can never see her; our parents are respectable people. . . . I do sometimes though, without their knowledge—in order to help . . .'

So that was what Jadviga was! . . .

There was a long silence.

'But—but your sister had nothing to do with . . . political matters?'

'I should say nothing whatever. . . . She drifted into that society only for money . . . because they have plenty of that . . . and through the Bourlakova, a woman friend of hers—the mistress of Sondrakov, you know. . . . They say she was shot too.'

'No, she was not,' replied Gregory sharply.

'How do you know?' queried the other innocently.

'Because . . . ' he hesitated, 'because I have seen her released.'

'Tut!' replied the other; 'that is strange. . . . She must have given things away then. . . .'

'Why?'

The other seemed amazed at the question. 'Would they spare her otherwise?' he exclaimed.

'She being a woman—why not?'

'Do you think they are like that?—you don't know them.'

'Are you a revolutionary too?' asked Gregory uneasily.

The other seemed a prey to conflicting sentiments. At first he appeared spell-bound with surprise, then half-amused.

'Promise me, Father—I mean Gospodin Kossalnikov, never to ask anyone that question again.'

'Why?'

'At least—not thus—straight out.'

'I fail to see it.'

'If I were a revolutionary,' he continued, 'would I be likely to answer with an unhesitating Yes? . . . Surely not. . . .'

Gregory kept silence.

'You are right,' he admitted at last. 'My question was foolish, but from the way you answer I take it you are not.'

'Yes and no,' was the reply.

'How so? . . . You can't be both.'

'Obviously not. . . . I am a revolutionary in this sense—that like every thinking citizen I would welcome a fundamental change in the system, even'—he spoke low—'if need be, at the price of a barricade and—and—but you know what I mean. It is only this, that without some show of strength—some act of violence even—the people are not likely to get a hearing as things stand. It has been proved—even if they go to see the Tsar peacefully they are shot down. . . .'

'Are they?'

'Of course they are—for one reason, because they are not led by some responsible person; but be that as it may, I am also a peaceful citizen—that above all—and in particular, because this kind of revolution, apart from the fact that it is not desirable—not tolerable in its extremes of violence and riot—has anyhow already failed.'

Gregory looked at him hard. Yes, he saw a distinct likeness to Jadviga in the face of the young man, in the tints of his hair, and especially the thick eyebrows and long eyelashes, yet . . . he was not as like her as that other—that blond giant commissary of the police who—who . . .

'How many brothers have you?' he asked involuntarily.

The other seemed uneasy.

'Why do you want to know?' he asked.

'It is not a secret, I suppose.'

'No, no,' protested the other, and he laughed; 'only—I failed to see the connexion between your question and the subject we are discussing.'

'I beg your pardon.'

'Not at all—not at all. As matters stand now—I am her only brother.'

Gregory looked at him. He fancied he saw a tear in the eye of the other, but he was turning his head.

'I am sorry,' he stammered.

'Not at all—how are you to know? My brother fell in one of the first battles of the war. . . .'

Gregory felt a brute for reviving such painful memories. He ventured on some platitude or other which passed unnoticed.

He was sorry for the young man. What a grief to lose his brother and to know his sister on the streets—or, to be more accurate, in the half-world of debauch!

A passing doubt as to the sincerity of the other vanished before that tear at the unfortunate reference to the lost brother. . . . Besides, other thoughts seized hold of his mind. Could he hope that this young man at least knew nothing of—of his relations to his sister? . . .

'So it is your opinion that the revolution has failed,' he remarked at last; 'does that mean that it is over?'

'Unfortunately nothing of the kind,' replied the other quickly. 'That is just my point . . . it is not over, and yet all this sacrifice and terrorism are utterly useless. That is where my sympathy with the movement ends. . . .'

Gregory wanted to say that he had heard this argument before, but the other left him no time.

'See,' he continued, 'even to-day the whole city lives in expectation of fresh disorders . . . you have noticed how all the shops are shut? . . .'

Gregory made a movement with his head indicating that he had not.

'How so? Surely . . . if not every single one, yet most.'

'I don't know the town. . . . It did not strike me.'

'Of course you don't. . . . I forget. But look at me, for instance; this afternoon I cannot return to my work.'

'Why?'

'Because—everything is shut,' he cried impatiently. 'Nobody dare risk his windows. The police itself is against . . . the resumption of normal life in view of—'

'Of riots?' interrupted Gregory, horrified at the thought of the cossack charge he had beheld.

'Not necessarily . . . since initially it is only a demonstration—a procession the people want to organise to go to the Winter Palace and see the Tsar. But who can tell what may happen?'

'You—you mean they may be shot at?' questioned Gregory, moving close to him, though they were now alone, as the other guests, one by one, had left.

'Decidedly—yes,' pursued the other, 'seeing that not only no responsible person leads them . . . but maybe a . . . someone who is worse. . . .'

'You mean a chief of one of the revolutionary clubs?' volunteered Gregory, parading his knowledge.

'No . . . of course not . . . that would not be so bad . . . since there might be good reason to shoot them . . . seeing what bandits most of them are. . . . I mean a provocator.'

'A provocator?—what is that?'

The youth seemed not merely speechless with astonishment but took some time to recover.

'You don't mean to tell me you don't know what that is?' he jerked out at last.

'I? . . . Upon my honour, I have no idea.'

There was a pause. The other appeared doubtful what to think. He lit a cigarette and shouted for the bill.

'The two together,' he told the waiter.

Gregory tried to protest.

'It is nothing—allow me,' remarked the other, and with a sigh, 'I fear you have a lot to learn.'

He settled the account. As the waiter was about to retire, he ordered two small vodkas and, when the man had gone, continued:

'A provocator, if you really don't know what that term stands for, is—well—a false friend.'

'A traitor, you mean? . . .'

'Yes—an agent in the pay of the police to entice the people to come on . . . out in the open . . . so that they can be shot down. . . .'

Astounding! Gregory opened his eyes wide; still he could not understand—what could be the object of such action?

But the other explained. The reign of terror to break the back of all unrest—it did not amount to much whether the people shot down were actually the most guilty—in fact everybody knew they were not. The Tsarists were not so stupid—the point was to deprive the agitators of all means of rousing the masses, because

these, horrified by the scenes, would not come out into the open again—then all was well.

'It is what they call canalising the revolution,' he added. 'A good expression, but how much innocent blood is spilt!'

Gregory wondered. Where did they get their agents from—men who lent themselves to such a game?

But again the explanation was handy. As a humble cossack in a firing squad got seduced by his little ration of vodka, so people higher up by money—or promise of advancement.

'And . . . the people do not know?' asked Gregory in amazement.

'No . . . of course not. . . . They have no leader. . . . Had they but one—say a respectable citizen—sure they would follow him. . . .'

Gregory mused.

'I repeat they are going to come out this very afternoon,' said the other, seizing his hat; 'and I don't mind telling you that rather than sit down here and do nothing, I intend to go and attempt to dissuade them before it is too late.'

'But how can you?'

'Can I?' He shrugged his shoulders. 'Is it not my duty to try? Am I not a man—as you are—a human being?' . . .

There was a pause.

'Noo!' he continued, 'what are you waiting for?—always wrapped in thought—always in the clouds! Come down to earth for a brief few hours and help me. . . .'

'What can I do? They don't know me.'

'That is just where it comes in. . . . Are you not in priest's garments—to them a priest—why don't you come?'

'I?'

'Yes—you,' he insisted; 'but you are afraid—'

'No,' he answered, 'that is—yes—in a sense, I am.'

The other made for the door.

'Stop!' said Gregory, suddenly excited; 'you shall not go alone.'

The waiter drew near to be paid for the vodka.

As soon as he had withdrawn, the youth opened the door.

'Come out into the street,' he commanded.

Gregory complied. They went on for a few yards in silence.

'No,' said the other suddenly; 'if you are afraid, don't come. You are no use.'

'I am not afraid,' replied Gregory Dimitrievich humbly, because

the man he was addressing was to him so great. 'I admit, I doubted my strength for one brief moment. I thought—of that cossack charge I witnessed. . . . I am all right now.'

'A cossack charge!' Jadviga's brother laughed loudly. 'One? . . . How many do you think I have seen?'

But that young man was a hero, meditated Gregory. If only he could be one too. . . . Oh, God! . . .

'I am a weak man,' he murmured, 'not like you . . . but you are right—I may do good. . . . Whatever happens I will come. . . .'

They passed along hurriedly. The street was wellnigh empty.

'My own opinion is this,' said the young man, 'that if a priest were to put himself at their head and lead unfalteringly and quietly, not only would they be orderly—I mean the crowd—but neither cossacks nor guardsmen would fire a shot.'

'You think they could see the Tsar?'

'Why not? If all were well regulated—but that is the whole problem. However, we shall see. . . .'

They reached the Dvorski Most, the bridge across the Nievâ, just by the Winter Palace.

'Where are we making for?' asked Gregory.

'For the Znamenskaia Ploshad—the big square at the far end of the Nevski Prospect, by the Nikolaievski Station. I believe they are going to mass thereabouts. . . .'

He did not halt, but went on as fast as he could.

Near the palace of the Tsar they passed two strongish bodies of troops posted on the right-hand side of the road, half-hidden among the trees of the Alexandrovski Garden. But no one stopped them.

'These are guardsmen,' commented the other, 'intended to prevent demonstrators from approaching the Imperial Residence—if these are disorderly!'

No tramways were running along the Nevski Prospect—no sleighs passed. The shops had all put up their shutters. Very few people were about, and such as there were disappeared readily down the side streets. But there were also no police.

Along the entire road they passed but one picket of mounted cossacks, slowly trotting towards the Palace.

'They appear to have taken few precautions,' remarked Gregory in his childlike manner.

'No,' replied the other, 'why should they? If the crowd

coming on is really riotous, they have plenty of time. After all, this avenue is just under three versts long.'

On they went. A trifle exhausted, they reached the square in front of the railway station. . . .

CHAPTER XI.

GREGORY remembered the Znamenskaia Square from the night of his arrival. It was deserted to-day as it was then, but, when he last saw it, it was a grey day and the snow was falling and dusk broke in upon the city. To-day the sun shone from an immaculate pale-blue sky, and it was, presumably, barely three o'clock. Still, the friendlier disposition of nature could not counteract the impression made by the menacing stillness of the empty avenue and square, which not even a cossack patrol haunted at this hour.

'One would hardly believe that we stand in the centre of a town sixty versts in circumference,' remarked his friend as if he guessed his thoughts. 'However, the station is guarded.'

'How do you know that?' inquired Gregory, who could see no-one.

'You bet it is,' pursued the other. 'They know their business too well for that . . . besides, if the rebels seized the railway station—' he caught himself up—'I mean riotous masses led by revolutionaries, surely it would be bad for them—the Tsarists. . . .'

'There is nobody here,' interrupted Gregory, who visualised an endless procession of demonstrators forming up, carrying banners and moving in step.

But Jadviga's brother had not heard.

'The railways are worked by elements of their two divisions of railway troops,' he resumed, 'some of which they had to recall from the front—for the regular personnel are not back yet . . . though they have already shot a full 80,000. . . .'

'I know,' whispered Gregory; 'or, at any rate, so I have been told. . . .'

'It is a fact, I regret to say, *plus* 40,000 sundries of all descriptions. . . . Well, the point is to try to prevent them from shooting any more to-day.'

'But they are not here—the demonstrators.'

'Don't you believe it! . . . In these streets masses are too

easily hidden, both troops and the others. . . . You don't expect these wretched civilians to assemble in the main square to be dispersed with *nagarkas* and loaded rifles before they start ?'

He laughed at the idea.

'You don't know,' he continued, 'the way of either party. Our friends we shall probably find somewhere by this first side street on the left—the Znamenskaia Road.'

Gregory marvelled at his friend's knowledge, for as he went to the street corner, sure enough in the distance he discerned a mass of men in movement towards them.

'There they are, I think. . . . You are right.'

But Jadviga's brother was not satisfied with the position. 'Mind you,' he said, 'before we let them pass here in front of the station, we shall have to negotiate with those inside.' He pointed to the huge, magnificent terminus. 'With the station-commandant, I mean, and explain to him that only a peaceful, orderly manifestation is intended in order to present a petition to the Tsar. Be clear about that, for otherwise, either they may not let us pass or, misjudging our intentions, fall on us from behind. . . .'

Gregory understood.

'You must make sure that none carry arms, neither red nor black flags, but just march quietly like ordinary citizens.'

'Yes . . . but you must help me. . . .'

The youth looked at him. 'You are not afraid already ?'

'No—no ! Only, I don't know how to make sure that no one carries arms.'

'You may leave that to me. . . . But some of the talking you must do. . . . Now, come along. We had better meet them further down, not so near the railway station.'

So saying, he dragged Gregory along with him. He seemed so confident—sure of himself. What it was not to be weak !

Yes . . . not to be weak !

Despite all that, Gregory trembled from head to foot. He was afraid the young man might notice. He was preparing to say that it was more excitement than fear—all excitement.

But Jadviga's brother asked no questions. He was strong and silent, a real man.

A few minutes later they came up against the crowd.

It was not at all of the type and disposition Gregory had imagined it to be. There was neither order nor even the semblance

of concerted action. All he could observe was that at the head of the procession were three or four files composed of men more nearly approximating to middle age than the motley throng of youths farther back. With some solemnity, and moving forward very slowly, they carried enormous red and black banners, which, being square and adorned with signs and inscriptions, were more like the *choroubs* used by the Church on great feasts than anything he had ever seen—such, for instance, as the small imperial pennon floating from a flag-staff on top of the Winter Palace when the Tsar was in residence.

The vast multitude farther back included not only males of all ages, mostly of the labouring class, but also a few individuals who by their look and their turn-out belonged to the neurasthenic students' set which was rarely absent on these occasions. There were even a few soldiers, adorned with a red cockade, who had turned down their shoulder-straps. These bore a hunted, apprehensive look, and presented a general aspect of neglect, not only in their persons and their uniforms, but their minds, which were dimmed with alcohol. Worse still, there were women and even children, and those behind kept pressing on the front files, for none but the foremost kept their distance or had a station allotted to them in the procession.

Also was it clear from the first that the majority of them were distinctly hostile in their demeanour, for, interrupting the mournful chant intoned by those who were carrying the banners, they greeted the priest and his friend with angry cries the moment they drew near.

There was a vast number of demonstrators—certainly many hundreds—and revolvers were at once brandished in the air by several in the seventh or eighth file. But it was obvious that many more were armed.

'Where are you going to?' shouted Jadviga's brother loudly, raising his hand.

A sullen murmur of many voices rose and died away. Not a word was distinguishable.

Undaunted, Gregory's friend stood still in the middle of the road, his right arm upraised, gazing fixedly at the flag-bearers. There was a momentary silence. It was his chance and he seized it.

'Listen!' he cried. 'Don't wave revolvers at me, for we are sympathisers and want to join you—the priest and I.'

He pointed at Gregory Dimitrievich.

'Listen!' he repeated. 'Don't brandish your revolvers in the air or point them at me—for they may only go off, and it is childish. Is it true that you are on your way to see the Tsar?'

There was a general murmur of assent, save for some noisy interrupters who laughed ironically.

'Very well, then—that can only be done in an orderly fashion. You cannot, in my opinion, pass the Nikolaievski Station, for it is strongly guarded by troops and, unless satisfied that order prevails, they would set on you and shoot you down—'

Some of the dissentients farther back again produced their revolvers. They were very angry. 'We are armed,' cried some of them.

'That is just it,' roared the broad-shouldered, blond young man, overawing the tumult once more. 'I dare say some of you behind there who have the chance to make off in good time have a couple of rounds in their popgun revolvers! . . . What use are they in an encounter with an organised force? . . .'

The dissentients with the revolvers—they who represented the noisiest, rowdiest element in the crowd—felt the sting of the allusion. Several men, and notably the women, argued with them, and pleaded for the removal of all fire-arms. The extremists could say but little lest the multitude should take them for provocators and break up.

'That is just it . . . these arms are no good. . . . Be orderly and—'

But it was no use. In the general hubbub Jadviga's brother could no longer make himself heard.

'Listen!' he tried once again, raising his arm and shouting. 'Let this priest lead you. Put away these arms and these banners and follow him.'

'Are we to chuck them in the road then . . . our arms?' retorted a working-man. 'You are mad. . . .'

'Put them away! Put them away!' shouted some.

As the majority were clearly of that opinion, back went the revolvers into the pockets or some improvised holsters inside the coats.

'That is better,' cried the youth. 'Now for the banners—let them go right to the back. . . . They can be left in the courtyard of the palace. . . . Now fall in, in files of five or six each. . . . Understand?'

The crowd obeyed. True, many seemed reluctant, but a few

very active men supported Gregory's young friend, whom they appeared to know. They marshalled the crowd until—at any rate as far as the eye could see—there was some show of organisation.

Jadviga's brother requested Gregory to take off the bronze cross which was suspended on a chain round his neck as is customary with the orthodox clergy. Then, without a further word, he fastened it to the end of his stick and handed it to Gregory.

'Carry that, Batoushka,' he said, 'and walk ahead of them. I shall be by thy side.'

He suddenly spoke in the second person, as if they had known each other a long time. Gregory saw nothing strange in that, thinking the crowd would understand the situation the easier. That was obviously the reason.

'Before we reach the square,' cried the youth, 'the Batoushka and I will see the commandant of the troops stationed in the Nikolaievski terminus and make sure that our motives are not misunderstood and we are allowed to pass. Understand?'

Everybody appeared to agree.

'And one thing more—of course, everyone guarantees order with his own person. No songs are allowed, whether harmless or not—lest there be the least misunderstanding. You know what these officials are—so give them no grounds to move against you. Then we pass down the Nevski Prospect to reach the Palace and ask for the Tsar, and a deputation of us will see him and lay before him our imperative demands for liberty. . . .'

This last remark was drowned in cheers.

'I don't think the extremists among them have now the chance they desire,' said the youth, turning to Gregory. He spoke in a loud voice so as to be heard by all. 'That is as well, for God only knows how many of them may be provocators bent on getting others into trouble. . . .'

'Now, move on at their head slowly, Father Gregory,' he continued, speaking more normally, 'a good 500 yards up the road, but stop at the first sign of soldiery. . . .'

Then he addressed the people: 'Are you ready now? Then follow gradually, but halt the moment you see us stop.'

There was no denying that the crowd was well in hand. To all appearance these were not the same men they ran into but a few minutes ago—all sign of hostility had vanished.

'I told you they only wanted a leader,' whispered Jadviga's

brother as he was taking his place on Gregory's left. 'You need only shepherd them on now, and nothing will happen.'

Gregory admired the energy and zeal of his young friend. All this time he had kept silence: wherefore, if he was now the leader, it was in no way his doing.

'Go on,' urged the other. 'Bear in mind that they look to you as a priest . . . but for your presence I count for nothing.'

He was really too modest.

'Go on—for goodness' sake! . . .'

Gregory was not hesitating, but simply lost in thought. How could he—he pondered—take the responsibility? He knew too little. . . . His instinct told him that there was a great risk. . . .

'For goodness' sake—quickly—before the rowdy elements gain the upper hand once more! Think, man, think! . . .'

But think he could not. It merely seemed impossible to draw back—for he feared that too.

And not knowing what he was doing he paced forward a step or two. The youth held him by the arm. Mechanically, sullenly he advanced, terrified mentally and physically.

Behind him resounded the dull shuffle of the crowd. Oh, God! . . . He must go on.

In the street before him there was literally not a soul. Not a sound struck his ear but the tramp of innumerable feet behind him. True to instructions no one sang, but also no one spoke a word. Not even Jadviga's brother.

They had gone a good 500 yards when, at the street corner by the square, suddenly appeared the solitary figure of a cossack standing still, his rifle slung. Immediately after, a second came alongside of him, and a third—then several. Hurriedly they lined up across the road, standing half a yard or so apart. There were perhaps some twenty in all. . . .

In answer to the command of some invisible superior they stood to attention, ordered arms and sloped arms.

Behind them in the centre of the square, in front of the monument of Alexander III, a *sovnia* of mounted cossacks was concentrating.

It was all the work of a moment.

Gregory, whose trembling arms carried the stick on top of which was fixed his bronze cross, had been gazing at the houses

in sullen expectation of a shot coming from one of the windows. But no, the shutters were all tightly closed—the city seemed petrified with terror just as he was.

When he noticed what was happening in front of him, his companion had already arrested his progress by a movement of his arm. The crowd behind him he could not see, since he dared not look round; but the people clearly knew, for their step was stayed also, save for a swaying, faltering movement common on such occasions to all masses in movement.

Before him the line of cossacks, again conforming to some unseen direction, went through a series of evolutions, the exact bearing of which Gregory could not immediately grasp. All that he realised was that the muzzles of their rifles pointed at him and his followers.

Behind, that swaying and faltering motion of the mass of humanity in movement became more accentuated. What were they doing—leaving him?

No; there was the slowly rising tide of subdued imprecations, intermingled with angry cries and curses. Some of the extremists behind could be heard shouting 'Here they are! Did we not tell you? . . . They have led us right into them. . . .'

Gregory was barely conscious of what was going on around him. He faltered and swayed back too.

Then he awoke to the fact that his young companion was already haranguing the crowd.

'Down with your revolvers!' he heard him roar angrily. 'Put them away, I tell you! Don't provoke them. . . .'

There were shouts of 'Back! Back!' and the women shrieked. Some were running away already, others pressing forward.

But Jadviga's brother regained the mastery. 'Wait here,' he shouted, 'while the Batoushka and I go up to see the officer . . . to explain. Don't fear. Remain orderly. . . .'

That done, he pulled out his white handkerchief and waved it to the cossacks. These did not move.

Then he seized Gregory by the arm and said 'Come!'

The two men moved forward. Still the cossacks remained motionless, always in the same attitude, their rifles with fixed bayonets at the ready facing the crowd.

It was really Jadviga's brother who dragged the priest with him, for Gregory had lost all control over his limbs.

'Halt!' shouted someone.

They halted.

'What do you want?' asked the same voice.

'We wish to speak to the senior officer present,' replied the blond young man coolly, 'concerning the objects and attitude of this demonstration.'

'Advance!' resounded from the other side.

A command rang out and the cossacks sloped arms.

Gregory and his companion came close up to them and, two men stepping aside, they passed through the line.

'I am the officer in command,' said a little subaltern leaning leisurely against the street corner, and evidently not visible before because he was hidden behind a tall broad-shouldered cossack.

'What can I do for you?' he asked, without troubling to shift from his comfortable attitude.

Gregory somehow recovered his self-assurance. He believed in himself now because of his friend, who had clearly mastered a difficult situation. No; there was no doubt now as to the wisdom of his policy. If order could be maintained, all was well; the others—the Tsarists—did not ask for more.

But his companion was not content. He demanded to be brought before a senior officer—the station-commandant stationed in the Nikolaievski terminus. . . .

'Have the police authorised your demonstration—yes or no?' queried the subaltern.

But Jadviga's brother insisted. The circumstances were exceptional, he said, and the problem the maintenance of order. If he could see the officer in command of the station force everything would be explained to his satisfaction.

The subaltern would not hear of it. His orders were precise; he could not override them. That was all there was to be said.

The blond young man thereupon requested him to step aside. 'We don't want to be overheard,' he said. 'The point I have to make is serious.'

Reluctantly the officer complied. For a brief moment both went out of hearing. What passed Gregory could not tell, but it was evident that his young friend was the only speaker, and urged his case with fervour.

'Can you stand surety, then, for the good behaviour of these people in the meantime?' he heard the subaltern ask as they slowly returned.

The youth pledged himself unhesitatingly. He personally would remain with the crowd while the Batoushka would interview the station-commandant.

Gregory wanted to protest, but with a movement of his arm the young man intimated that he must conform. 'I cannot stand surety,' he remarked, 'unless I stay with them myself.'

'You say your name is Sergei Alexandrovich Oushakov?' queried the subaltern. 'Have you your papers?'

Jadviga's brother produced them.

The subaltern seemed satisfied. He beckoned to an N.C.O.

'Take this priest to the *rayon*-commandant,' was his order, 'and the young man passes back to the crowd.'

Another command rang out; the cossacks ordered arms. Two stepped aside, and slowly the blond youth walked back to the demonstrators.

Meanwhile the N.C.O., leading Gregory, took him across the square and into the station.

The huge terminus was full to overflowing. As far as the eye could see nothing but infantry, the men in their greatcoats smoking and chatting in groups by their arms, which were piled in long rows along the platforms. Nearer the swinging entrance gates were posted what looked like miniature guns, mounted on low, heavy wheels, each one of them jealously guarded by a sentry. But there were no civilians, and on the permanent way but two large trains and a little spare rolling-stock. The locomotives were under steam.

It was difficult to get through. But the N.C.O. repeating some unintelligible phrase with parrot-like precision, everybody made way for him.

Gregory felt that many eyes were riveted on him. Remarks were passing here and there; some were laughing. At him? Possibly. . . . Yet, what did it matter?

He did not know what he was going to say—just plead the people's cause. . . . What more could he do?

He made an effort to walk with his head erect. It would not do to expose any want of self-confidence. . . . He knew the official mind well enough for that. After all, he could but fail. . . .

Jadviga's brother, Sergei Alexandrovich Oushakov—for at last he knew his full name—had inspired him by his example.

Thus was he trying to brace himself up for the coming ordeal, attempting to make a show of courage which he did not possess. . . .

'Who is thy prisoner?' he heard a young lieutenant ask as they were approaching a door.

The N.C.O. sprang to attention.

'A priest, sir. I was ordered by my officer to bring him before the commandant of the *rayon*. He heads a demonstration and wishes to speak to him about it.'

The lieutenant shrugged his shoulders. 'Have you written authority?' he asked, turning to them both.

'No,' replied the N.C.O.

The other disappeared inside the door. Gregory did not relish this reference to himself as a prisoner.

But the lieutenant came out again. 'Step in!' he commanded, a little disdainfully.

Gregory took off his hat while he was still outside, then, on entering, bowed and crossed himself many times.

Nobody said a word. He looked up. He was in a small, neatly furnished station office, face to face with a corpulent little colonel who sat by a roll-top desk and turned over some files without so much as a glance at him.

'The *rayon*-commandant,' whispered the lieutenant deferentially, and vanished somewhere behind the awe-struck Gregory.

'Who are you? You want—what?' asked the officer brusquely. Still he seemed engrossed on his papers to the exclusion of everything else.

By way of an answer Gregory started on a long account of the intended demonstration, its object of seeing the Tsar quietly and presenting a petition. Incoherent as ever on these occasions, he told his story very badly, spoke indistinctly and much too fast. He had gone a long way before he incidentally mentioned his own name. He was still wide of his subject, when there was a knock at the door and, the colonel giving permission to enter, a soldier stepped into the room, saluted, and handed him a letter.

'Go on,' said the colonel gruffly, 'I cannot believe that such as you can have finished yet.'

Gregory resumed. He was now giving promises, staking his honour that the manifestation would be regulated in perfect order, if only he were trusted.

It was impossible to say whether the colonel was listening or not—whether indeed he had ever troubled to follow a single word.

In the same attitude as before, supporting his head with his left arm, he was staring at his desk, the only difference being that, instead of examining his files, he was attentively perusing the letter.

'Well,' he remarked at last, regardless of the fact that the long flow of words had not yet ended, 'you—Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov, as you call yourself—that is right, isn't it?' he interrupted himself and turned over the letter.

Gregory nodded affirmatively.

'... are either as great a fool as ever I have met or—and that is more likely—a rogue.'

The point of the remark escaped the 'prisoner,' if such he was. He protested violently.

'Perhaps I am neither,' he remarked proudly.

Noisily the colonel got up from his chair. For the first time his small, round, brown eyes glanced at the stranger. But only for an instant.

'However,' he said slowly, 'your gang may pass. . . . I shall withdraw my soldiers. . . .'

Gregory Dimitrievich flushed with excitement. He had won then? . . . Made good his case! . . .

The colonel was staring out of the window, through which the rays of the sun glided into the room, reflecting their light in his eyes.

'Only—don't expect us to admire the like of you,' muttered the officer as though primarily talking to himself. 'We can use you, but . . .' He stopped short.

Gregory could not seize his meaning. He surmised vaguely that the old soldier—for such he was, now that he came to look at him and his closely-cropped white hair around his oval-shaped partially bald head—regretted his decision. With renewed vigour, therefore, he reiterated his promises of order guaranteed by himself personally.

The colonel did not let him finish. Rapidly he turned from the window, stepped towards him, and looked at him squarely.

Gregory did not flinch. Their eyes met.

The *rayon-commandant* wanted to see through him—scan his soul. Let him. . . .

But the colonel strode back to his desk. Again he sat down, supporting his head with his left arm.

'I may have done you an injustice,' he remarked after a while, 'when I called you a rogue—I fear you are only a fool. . . .'

Gregory shook his head.

'I am not,' he replied. 'I believe in the people—in my capacity to lead them. That is all.'

He was really sincere now—in all honesty he had trust in himself.

The old officer shrugged his shoulders again. Was it worth pursuing the argument with such a man? That was clearly what passed through his mind. But he had second thoughts.

'Listen!' he said, and he looked up. 'You are taking a great responsibility. . . . I—I am a soldier, not a butcher. You understand? I don't want to—to have to—shoot.'

'I understand,' said Gregory.

But the colonel stared at him in amazement.

'You smile?' he said. 'Smile!—at this hour—over a matter as grave as this! . . . Can you—can you not see it is a tragedy? Do you realise what you are doing?'

But Gregory was not a peasant for nothing. Obstinacy was a quality he had brought with him into the world. He was on one trend of thought and it held him, and nothing that now passed by way of advice or evidence could he take or weigh. Contrary to all expectations, he had his opportunity and he was not going to let it go.

'I believe in myself, that is all,' he reiterated coolly. 'Is it so—so surprising?'

The other seemed at a loss as to what to say.

'Very well, then,' he retorted, frowning and severe; 'don't blame me . . .'

He pressed a little bell which stood upon his desk. In an instant the young lieutenant reappeared and saluted.

'Take this priest back, or rather instruct the N.C.O. who brought him to do so, and give orders for the troops to retire within the station building. The mounted cossacks patrol the approaches as heretofore.'

'I listen, sir,' replied the lieutenant.

Gregory bowed and crossed himself fervently. The last he beheld of the old colonel was two melancholy, brooding eyes gazing at the door and following him out as he withdrew in the wake of the lieutenant.

CHAPTER XII.

It was not the first time that Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov found himself involved in the endless, enigmatic contradictions of his Slav temperament. Gravitating from one extreme to another, he was alternately inspired by an enthusiasm which in the depth of its religious conceptions ignored the elementary dictates of reason, only to subside into a dull realism, saturating his mind with such despondency that life itself had no more value—but only death. In either event he was callous and in his typical pride a true son of his race. Therein, indeed, lay the key to his character; by nature of a timid and retiring disposition, he drifted into danger like a hero, into safety like a coward.

A mental Don Quixote, he could never appraise a situation at its true worth.

No wonder then that he left the *rayon-commandant* in his office in the Nikolaievski Station with the firm conviction that his cause—that is, the people's cause, for already he considered himself their leader—had triumphed either by its own merit or on account of his own eloquent plea. All the afternoon, so long as the danger was not real and, at all events, the responsibility not primarily his, he had allowed himself in craven cowardice to be led by a virtual stranger; but now that he really stood alone and fully committed, he was calm and shouldered a task for which a moment's reflection must have told him he was unfit. He was actuated only by his infinite trust in God, in himself and in his enterprise.

In God—because, not having moved so far away from his past life as he fancied in little more than a month, he was still capable of drawing upon that accumulated fund of mystic ardour which was the treasure of many years; in himself—because his present existence differed fundamentally from the life he had led before, though it was so imperfectly assimilated as yet that the only comprehensible unit within it could be but his own self; in his cause—for the reason that it vaguely corresponded to that direct contact with the world which he sought, and presented the *fata Morgana* of an improved social order which it was his ambition to erect.

There was consequently little reason now for the N.C.O. to help him push his way through the crowd of soldiery. He could

have made all stand aside by his own authority. No one mocked at him, nor did anyone pass comments, for his face was resolute and calm and his gait no longer that of a prisoner.

Hurriedly they crossed the square. The troops were already withdrawing in accordance with their orders; already the crowd of manifestants in the Znamenskaia Street had automatically resumed its solemn march, like a heavy mass ponderously moving along a straight line. Was there, then, really nothing more to warn Gregory Dimitrievich—no inward counsel to tell him—that this straight line of movement was the direct line—to danger?

No; it did not occur to him to doubt of success now, and he smiled as he met the people at the entrance to the square. As his N.C.O. cossack guide saluted smartly and left, they—that is the front files of the demonstrators—catching sight of him, raised a cheer which, being taken up by those behind, resounded and reverberated through the deserted streets of the immense city, apparently abandoned to him and to them. Gloomy and sullen, the shuttered houses contemptuously threw back the echo as if mocking the joy of self-intoxicated mortals oblivious of all that stone walls had meant for them in the past.

Someone handed him his cross tied to the top of his stick. Ardently and in the sight of all he kissed it, and carried it, not tremblingly as heretofore, but confidently, with his head erect.

It occurred to him to ask where Sergei Alexandrovich Oushakov was, but a well-dressed youth whom he took to be a student informed him that he had gone to the rear to organise the back files. On the pretext of looking for him, the student made off in the same direction.

But there was no more time to lose, for the afternoons were still short in early February. Hence the question as to who still carried arms or banners could not be gone into.

Swiftly Gregory Dimitrievich led the people across the near side of the square so as not to pass too close to the mounted cossacks, who were lined up two deep between them and the entrance to the terminus.

The crowd followed smoothly, marching in step. Its leading files had already turned into the broad Nevski Prospect when a few angry cries behind him gave evidence of hostile feelings. They were directed by the extremist section against the equestrian statue of the dead Tsar Alexander III gazing mutely down at them.

The cossacks too, taunted by a few insults hurled at them defiantly across the square, moved uneasily in their saddles, and the hoofs of their restless horses clattered jarringly upon the pavement.

Of all this Gregory Dimitrievich noticed but little. True, he sent a man back to exhort the recalcitrants to conform to the spirit of their enterprise, but this messenger also did not return. No doubt he had fallen in farther back by the side of Oushakov, whom he said he knew. . . .

A mournful chant rose from behind and swelled into the choir of many voices. Forbidden though it was to sing, there was not a soul in sight all the way down the Nevski Prospect, and the solemn tune, the words of which eluded him, bore close resemblance to a religious hymn such as one might hear in church. It was the famous funeral chant intoned by the protagonists of liberty in honour of their dead—for those fallen upon the three-century-old road to freedom. Long it continued in varying verses, but ever angrier, ever fiercer rose the refrain, the last two words of which alone were distinguishable for their accentuated reference to the 'Russki Narod,' the people of all modern Russia, of great ancient Russia, who struggled for liberty.

Without an incident they reached the bridge over the Phontanka river. They were half-way.

Their easy progress intoxicated the people. Were they at last going to succeed? Without a doubt, for they could negotiate the remaining one and a half versts before dark and then—then, grouped around the fine column with which Alexander I commemorated his victory over Napoleon, opposite the Winter Palace where lived the Tsar in all his glory, they could put forward their demands. Then the cherub which crowned the top of the column would be their herald of victory too! Nay, for their guardian angel was not chiselled of stone; theirs the spirit of history turning a new page in the annals of mankind!

The worst of them forgot their anger now; others prayed as though they were on a pilgrimage. But their pent-up passion, their exuberant joy, had to find an outlet. Gregory Dimitrievich had scarcely had time to thank God that they had stopped singing before they began with one voice to chant the 'Marseillaise' in its Russian version.

He did not know that either, for he had never heard it. Again it seemed to him a religious anthem; again it rose and fell, with

the rhythmic beauty of its every line heightened by the spontaneity of the effort and the fervour of the performers.

By now they were well across the bridge over the Moika river. Only once did Gregory turn round, stirred by the portentous volume of sound behind him, and it came to him for the first time that in some mysterious way the crowd behind him had swollen into a gigantic mass of people of all descriptions, of both sexes and all ages, and that in the process the earlier order had vanished, even in the leading files. The banners, red and black, which he had believed discarded or unostentatiously borne at the tail end, were fluttering in the wind at the head of this host—a multitude now, to be counted not in hundreds but in thousands.

No voice could dominate the multitude now, nor any arm stay its movement as it gravitated onwards, impelled by its own momentum.

Whence had they emerged—all these people—since the Nevski Prospect was deserted? Out of the houses, from the side streets? Perhaps out of both. . . .

Faintly he realised a change of mood in the crowd. Suddenly it seemed to be in the grip of a power not his own . . . in the hands of the extremists who seemed to have grown ubiquitous and transmitted to it their looser instincts; not only revolvers, but every kind of small arms appeared and were brandished in the air, displayed defiantly for all to behold.

Behind him on his right there was an ugly rush. Quickly he turned round. Armed with sledge-hammers, a few hooligans broke into a shop. There was a noise, an uproar, the half-audible heat of an argument drowned in resounding hurrahs as an iron shutter, yielding under the strokes, admitted the looters.

Gregory Dimitrievich tried to stay the movement, but could not, for the mass of men and women sweeping on carried him along like a rising tide.

Suddenly he became aware of his helplessness, and in that moment his craven terror returned. Already he saw more than there was—the danger ahead. In the flash of a second he realised what he had done, but also—that it was too late. . . .

The illusion of a brief hour was over, the spell of his enthusiasm broken, his courage shattered. He went on still, not because he wanted to—because he could not help it. He was not even walking now, but hemmed in between others—no longer the leader, but one of the many led . . . by whom? By the senseless,

self-propelled mass behind. There were screams; women and children wept and swooned; some fell—both men and women—and the others all trampled on them, himself included. He let go the stick surmounted by his bronze cross—he never saw it again. To right and to left, several made for the houses, hoping the locked doors would open—some of these sought shelter, some loot. A few, struggling fiercely, laughed in morbid enjoyment of the opportunity afforded them for the display of their strength.

The revolvers went off, not merely sending their bullets aimlessly through space, but whizzing against the houses. Desperadoes used them to free themselves in the crowd. Someone shouted 'The cossacks!' but panic was already in evidence, not generated by phantoms of charging *sotnias*, but arisen as the result of internal disorganisation.

Calmer spirits were restoring quiet when the weight of the centre and the rear fell with a heavy impact upon the disordered head of the procession. There were enough who could see that there were no cossacks to raise the cry 'On! On!'

No individual could now turn back. The hopes raised were too great to be lightly abandoned within a few hundred yards of the goal. . . .

Yet the shrieks, the shouts and the yells, to the low accompaniment of an incessant roar and the rhythmic sound of trampling feet, the shuffle of the struggle in front, and the commotion of the looting at the sides, intermingled with the ever more frequent reports of fire-arms, drowning the hysterical lament of fainting women and the agonised groans of those trodden to death—all this was the din of civil battle.

At this moment Gregory Dimitrievich, though still far in front, had been borne, he knew not how, by the swaying, struggling mass of men somewhat more to his left than he intended. Animated by the sole idea of pushing ahead in one last attempt to resume the leadership and avert the impending disaster at any price, he made a vast effort and forced his way well to the front.

It was one of his inspired moments—his last. Shaking himself free like a tiger, his arms folded in prayer and then in one final supreme effort raised above his head—stretched heavenward in supplication—he stood rigid.

Behind him the crowd stayed. Believing the situation saved at the last minute, he turned and stood facing the people, about to harangue them—sure for one more brief instant of himself.

Pausing in silence, he had not yet found his words when with a rush on came the crowd again. It stopped abreast of him. The next instant shots poured out of the windows and from the high roofs all around. Some of these came from the General Staff offices—behind him, on his left, since he stood facing the people; some from the more distant Admiralty building athwart the end of the avenue. Two well-directed volleys from the troops hidden behind the trees of the Alexandrovski Garden swept the street.

He was not hit, though many fell around him, rolling on the ground with shrieks of agony.

An instant later, beset by a multitude of frantic men and howling women, he was carried off his feet and pressed farther away still to the left.

There lay the broad Bolshaia Morskaia Street, whither this frenzied, stampeding, bleeding agglomeration of humanity turned for shelter.

But it was in vain.

The clatter of many hoofs resounded on the pavement and out of that very street emerged two *sotnias* of cossacks, the scabbards of their swords clinking against their stirrups as they drew their sabres, and their *nagaikas* hissing through the air as they charged the crowd and rode it down. . . .

Gregory Dimitrievich, half-stunned by a blow on his head, sank to the ground bleeding, but disengaging himself rose to his knees.

The cossacks had swept past him by now, and the dull struggle which went on behind him he could not see. He had lost his hat and his cassock was rent and torn; his dishevelled hair fluttered wildly in the wind—like those red and black banners now beaten to the ground. His moustache, his beard were crimson with blood and besmirched by the dirt of the street, the half-melted unclean snow of the metropolis.

From his eyes rolled large tears, while mutely, helplessly, he wrung his hands. . . .

Then some came—who they were he knew not—and, supporting him, raised him to his feet; but stand he could not—he leant against them.

Vaguely he gazed around him and inclined his aching head to his right, where below him a working-man with a herculean effort raised himself from the pavement. Reeling, staggering, he watched him, uncertain as to whether he would fall again or

right himself. Was he wounded? Where were they—the others? The cossacks? . . .

There was no shooting now; it had died away the moment the cavalry charged. Nothing was audible of the struggle as it receded farther and farther into the distance, now but a ruthless pursuit of the routed. A long low moan resounded here and there; the snarling rasp of a man dying came from somewhere near. But there was no word of living speech, and those whose bodies covered the streets either lay rigid or twitched and turned in silence.

But the workman by his side had righted himself. His lips pressed together closely; his left hand reached up and stroked his square red beard, stained, like Gregory's, with clammy and clotted blood which dripped on to his waistcoat.

Shaking and swaying, yet still standing, at last his lips opened, and with the savage stare of a half-conscious madman, his cheeks distorted by a smile which crueller emotions petrified upon his visage, he addressed the priest in deep and halting tones, yet distinctly despite the huge effort apparent.

'So these are thy friends . . .' and he pointed somewhere, though where precisely was not clear.

'Thy friends . . .'

His head fell forward and his arm dropped. His entire body swayed forward so far that surely he must fall upon his face. But no; he rallied.

His brows knotted tightly and his eyes flashed.

'Thou traitor!' he shouted. 'Thou hireling of the Tsarists!'

He could not go further. His left arm went up to his neck as if to free it from something that stifled him.

But he stood still, square, rigid at last.

'Thou . . . antichrist!' he burst out.

His lips closed tightly and his eyes rolled, but steadying himself quickly he measured the full height of the awe-struck, speechless Gregory Dimitrievich, whom willing arms supported from behind to keep him from falling.

In an instant his right hand emerged from his coat pocket, a revolver appeared, and a flash and a dull report whipped across the street.

The unseen helpers let go; Gregory Dimitrievich fell backwards, but swiftly rallied himself. Again he was on his knees, wringing his arms and staring wildly at his adversary who, turning his weapon against himself, discharged it through his open mouth

and slowly, majestically swayed forward; then, suddenly losing control over the weight of his body, fell with a heavy thud upon the ground.

That was the death of a soldier of the revolution.

It was the last scene Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov witnessed. He was vaguely conscious of standing on his feet, but whether of his own effort unaided or not he could not tell. He realised that the assassin's bullet had hit him somewhere near the groin, that his head bled from some wound, that a blond, broad-shouldered young man who stood before him was one he had seen not very long ago, yet whose name he could not recall. By his side stood also another blond man, square-shouldered also, but taller by far.

'Jadviga . . .' he whispered, 'Jadviga's brother . . . brothers . . .'

It was the last he saw of this world and said to this world.

A short time later, night fell upon the capital. The electric street lamps sped their flickering rays through the dark, casting a yellow hue upon the silent dead and the groaning wounded summarily heaped upon sledges by the military lest they should impede the traffic.

That evening, as if nothing had occurred, the city resumed its normal aspect more closely than at any time since the famous January 9, 1905, almost a month ago to the day.

It was as if all had heard what a tall, broad-shouldered, blond man said to his younger brother, a smaller copy of himself, and like him blond and broad-shouldered.

'The back of the revolution is broken—anyhow in the capital.'

But where the light of the electric street lamps could not penetrate, into the obscurity of the ample and lofty cellar of a palatial residence, the corner house of the Nevski Prospect and the Bolshaia Morskaia Street, some men, led by a broad-shouldered blond youth, carried the lifeless body of a man arrayed in the torn garments of a priest.

No bronze cross adorned his breast, and while they lowered his earthly remains into a small cavity in the ground, which they covered in with bricks, the forlorn whine of a wounded dog in the street without supplied the funeral dirge for the occasion.

Then the young broad-shouldered blond distributed two roubles in shining silver among the four men who had helped him and, walking away quickly, chanted the refrain :

‘ Thus die the dreamers of Russia,
The dreamers of Russia,
Of Holy, Holy Russia,
Of Russia . . . of Russia.’

THE END.

